

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIV, Issue No. 226

FRIDAY AUGUST 13, 2004

www.saipantribune.com 50¢

INSIDE



Seaside Grill

Saipan's favorite sunset hang-out—the Seaside Grill restaurant at the Pacific Islands Club—is expanding its operations to offer an array of international cuisine for local residents and tourists so they could enjoy a sumptuous lunch at affordable prices by the scenic San Antonio beach.

Page 16



Heavy Gunfire

The sound of heavy gunbattles resonated throughout the holy city of Najaf on Thursday, as U.S. forces battled militia loyal to radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr.

Page 30



Tarantino's Genius

With the release of Kill Bill Vol. 2 on DVD this week, viewers can finally watch Kill Bill the way it was originally intended—as one movie (instead of a two-parter).

Page 37

CDA loan delinquency at 83 percent

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

The delinquency rate on loans obtained from the Commonwealth Development Authority has reached an astronomical 83 percent, which will amount to millions of dollars in losses if the monies are not collected—a disastrous situation for the CNMI's money lending agency.

The CDA vowed to aggressively collect on bad loans, as it opposed proposals for a legislative measure that would seek to condone certain delinquent loans.

Tom Glenn A. Quitugua, chairman of the CDA's Development Corp. Division, said such legislative intervention would result in “financial disaster” for the CDA.

“In all fairness, I plead to the legislators not to succumb to outside influences. It is unfortunate that at this time, all of

our lawmakers have been approached and pressured,” Quitugua said.

“If the Legislature passes a law...[that will] forgive all debtors, including the ones [who] are in default, what would become of our good borrowers who made every effort to pay their loan? What would be the next law? Would it be a law rewarding these few people?” he asked.

Quitugua noted, however, that the Babauta administration and the entire

board of the DCD and the CDA oppose such a legislative proposal.

In a telephone interview, Quitugua said he received information that a bill might be reintroduced at the Senate, amid lobbying efforts by certain parties. Quitugua refused to name any lobbying party.

“As chairman of the DCD, I do not wish to air out people's financial problems in the media, but for the sake of

See CDA on Page 12



AGNES E. DONATO

TEAM BUILDING FUN

Members of the Volunteers Club at the Northern Marianas College led the ROPES team building exercises, conducted by Ed Calvo at the gym, during the last day of the orientation for new students yesterday.

Visitor influx sustains recovery in July

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

The total visitor arrivals into the islands last month sustained a trend of recovery for the CNMI's tourism industry, posting double-digit percentage growth compared with the total visitor arrivals posted during the same month in the last two years.

Marianas Visitors Authority Vicky



Benavente

Benavente also disclosed that new airlines plan to operate at Kansai Airport and the Central Japan International Airport in the coming months—developments that would further enhance outbound Japanese travel.

A total of 47,442 tourists came to the islands last month, reflecting a 36.24 percent growth compared with July 2003's 34,822. Compared with July 2002's figures, the MVA said the current total increased by 24.09 percent.

“Due to the occurrence of world events in 2003, visitor arrivals are more realistically comparable to that of arrivals in the same period in 2002,” Bena-

See VISITOR on Page 12

Compact money to be shared among agencies

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

Gov. Juan N. Babauta is now resolved to allocate some \$5.2 million in Compact Impact funds among certain agencies after he tried but failed to convince the Department of the Interior to use the money as leverage to pay off the government's debts.

“They [DOI] didn't say ‘cannot’ but it would be difficult to justify under the law that implements the Compact Impact and even our Constitution to borrow money to pay off public debt and specially when the debt was incurred for the operations of the government,” he told reporters yesterday.

“We tried. We tried,” he added.

The governor earlier inquired with

DOI deputy assistant secretary for insular affairs David B. Cohen whether the CNMI could use the funds to retire the government's longstanding debt totaling some \$101 million.

In an interview last June, Cohen had hinted that the CNMI's request may not be possible.

“We have to examine the statute to

See COMPACT on Page 12

Absentee voting for deployed troops ensured

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Election Commission has moved to ensure that troops scheduled for deployment this month will not be disenfranchised during next year's general election.

CEC executive director Gregorio C. Sablan announced yesterday that Capt. Franklin Babauta has approved the Election Commission's request to conduct a briefing for the

See ABSENTEE on Page 12



Local

NMC students to get scholarship funds directly

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

The Northern Marianas College has granted the students' request to be "treated as adults," allowing them to directly receive and

manage their own CNMI scholarship money.

NMC president Antonio V. Deleon Guerrero said the students made the request in view of the delay in the issuance of their Pell grant awards, which caused the students to become increasingly dependent on the CNMI scholarship.

Under current practice, the college asks scholarship recipients to sign a form allowing for their scholarship checks to be disbursed through the college for payment of their outstanding tuition and fees, and book charges.

Only the money left from these charges eventually goes to the students.

"We want to treat the students as adults. We think they are responsible enough to voluntarily settle their obligations with the college. It's not fair to hold them hostage and [demand] that they



Deleon Guerrero

pay everything when they register," Deleon Guerrero said.

To implement this new policy, Deleon Guerrero asked the CNMI Scholarship Office to disregard all release forms submitted by the students for their Fall 2004 scholarship checks.

"Our students have agreed to work with us to apply as much of their CNMI scholarship funds toward their tuition

and fees and book charges as possible," Deleon Guerrero told CNMI Scholarship Office executive director Melissa Guajardo in a letter. "The students have further agreed to make arrangements with the college to ensure that their outstanding balances are cleared by the end of the Fall 2004 semester."

Upon the students' suggestion, those with outstanding balances will not be allowed register for the Spring 2005 semester, he added.

For his part, CNMI Scholarship Advisory Board chair Roman Benavente said the students' check should be out in two weeks or so.

Students get an average of \$2,000 each year from the CNMI Scholarship Office.

In the meantime, they may charge the purchase of their books at the college bookstore starting today.

CARS UNLIMITED

diabetes
+GREEN

LOTTERY

WWII ordnance disposal tomorrow

Tomorrow afternoon, tourists and local residents may not go to certain areas in Marpi due to the scheduled detonation of live vintage ordnance at the foot of the Marpi cliff.

The Emergency Management Office scheduled the detonation from 3pm to 5pm, advising the public to stay

away from the area located approximately one mile north from the Marpi landfill.

The detonation site, Laderan Laggun Cliffline, has grid coordinates of 15 degrees, 16 minutes 0.0865 seconds north; 145 degrees, 49 minutes, 0.3313 seconds east; and 5,000 feet above sea level, according to the EMO.

"Due to the danger imposed by this operation, the general public, especially tour operators, commercial pilots and fishermen are strongly advised to stay at least one mile away from this area during the time [of detonation]," the EMO said.

Elements of the U.S. military's Explosive Ordnance Disposal Detachment team would explode the ordnance, the EMO said.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently issued an emergency permit to allow the disposal of the ordnance, which it considered as wastes. Permitted for detonation were projectiles, grenades, mortars, and a blasting cap.

The EPA said the wastes pose imminent and substantial danger to human health and the environment.

Based on an inventory by the EMO, up for detonation are 276 pieces of U.S. military ordnance, with a total weight of 418 lbs. Six Japanese ordnance weighing approximately 45.83 lbs. will also be exploded.

The explosives were remnants of World War II, as Saipan was a major battleground between American and Japanese troops.

The EMO and the military occasionally team up to detonate scores of unexploded vintage ordnance that are found on different portions of the islands. Last March 12, the Navy detonated over 1,000-lbs. of World War II ordnance in Marpi. (John Ravelo)

Island Snapshots

The Saipan Tribune accepts contributed pictures of birthdays, weddings, baptisms, and other community and family events for free publication. Material submitted should be original and not copyrighted, in digital or print format. Must include a caption containing complete details (a description of the event, identities of the persons in the picture, the date, and the place), the name of the contributor, and a contact number. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to edit the caption, the date of publication and the size of the picture. Contributors can e-mail their submissions to editor.tribune@gtepacifica.net. To check if contributions are received, call 235-6397, 235-2440, or 235-8747.

uno shop

mcdo

camacho

cb cruz

COMMUNITY

Briefs

NMPASI public forum today

The Northern Mariana Islands Protection & Advocacy Systems Inc. wishes to invite all CNMI residents to a public forum on Saipan for comments on its fiscal year 2005 Statement of Objectives and Priorities.

The public hearing will be held today, Aug. 13, at the NMPASI Conference Room, at 6pm.

NMPASI administers the Protection & Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness, Protection & Advocacy for Developmental Disabilities, Protection & Advocacy for Assistive Technology, Protection & Advocacy for Traumatic Brain Injury, Protection & Advocacy for Individual Rights, Client Assistance Program, and Protection & Advocacy for Beneficiaries for Social Security.

Head Start orientation today

The Head Start Program will open for orientation today, Aug. 13, 2004. Teachers are currently contacting parents/guardians about their child's scheduled orientation dates and times. Should parents/guardians not have a contact number, visit or call your child's center or the main office on Capitol Hill to obtain your schedule. During the orientation, allow for at least two to three hours of your time to be spent with your child and teacher. For more information, call your center or the main office at 664-3751 or 664-3768.

Attention to all veterans on Tinian

A representative from the CNMI Office of Military and Veterans Affairs will be on Tinian until today, Aug. 13. All veterans and family of veterans who are interested in applying for Veterans Administration benefits are encouraged to meet with Ruth Coleman, veteran representative from Saipan at the Retirement Office on Tinian from 9am to 4pm. Coleman will also give an overview of Veterans Administration programs and services, as well as conduct/assist disabled veterans open or follow up on their VA cases.

For more information, contact the Office of the Military and Veterans Affairs on Saipan at 664-2650 or Annie at the Tinian Retirement Office, 433-3863.

AmeriCorps recruiting 34 members

The Public School System's AmeriCorps program—a federally funded program—is currently recruiting 34 members to participate in the community service and educational program.

AmeriCorps members will provide tutoring and mentoring services to CNMI youths between the ages of 6-17 at various youth centers. Members will assist students during structured youth center activities that may include homework assistance, arts/crafts, sports activities/events, computer trainings, etc.

Members will be awarded a living stipend for 900 hours served; and educational award of \$2,362 after successful completion of program; developmental trainings and workshops; and satisfaction of serving the youth and community in the CNMI.

Those who want to participate in the program should be U.S. citizens, at least 17 years old, a high school graduate, and is drug free and possesses a clean police clearance.

Application and proof of eligibility requirements must be submitted by Aug. 18, 2004.

For applications, contact AmeriCorps Program, CNMI Public School System Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Office, Retirement Fund Building, 2nd Floor, Capitol Hill, Saipan; or call 664-3716/32; or email tenoriod@pss.cnmi.mp.

Renewal, issuance of military ID cards

The Family Readiness Group of the Echo Company 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry would like to inform all Reservists and families of the following about the issuance and/or renewal of military ID cards on Aug. 17-20 at the Reserve Center in Puerto Rico.

Families of active, Reserve or veteran soldier(s) should get a new or renew their military ID cards at the Reserve Center.

For more information, call Cil Blas/FRG Leader at 323-4675 (evenings).

St. Remedios school opening

The St. Remedios Early Childhood Development Center School has announced its opening dates.

Three-year-old students will have their first day of school on Wednesday, Aug. 18. School for 4-year-olds will begin the next day, Thursday, Aug. 19, while 5-year-olds will have their opening on Friday, Aug. 20.

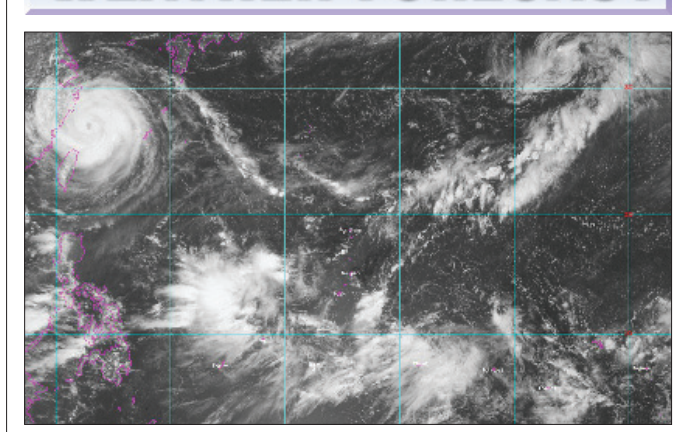
On Aug. 23, Monday, all students of St. Remedios will all come to school. Students should come to school before 7:30am and parents are requested to pick up their children no later than noon.

If you have any questions, contact St. Remedios at 234-6247 or 234-6244.

FLIGHT SCHEDULES OF AUGUST 13, 2004									
DEPARTURES					ARRIVALS				
Destination	Carrier	Flight	Time	Day	Origin	Carrier	Flight	Time	Day
Guam	SA	601	06:00	W	Guam	SA	602	06:00	W
Guam	SA	603	06:30	W	Guam	SA	604	06:30	W
Guam	SA	605	07:00	W	Guam	SA	606	07:00	W
Guam	SA	607	07:30	W	Guam	SA	608	07:30	W
Guam	SA	609	08:00	W	Guam	SA	610	08:00	W
Guam	SA	611	08:30	W	Guam	SA	612	08:30	W
Guam	SA	613	09:00	W	Guam	SA	614	09:00	W
Guam	SA	615	09:30	W	Guam	SA	616	09:30	W
Guam	SA	617	10:00	W	Guam	SA	618	10:00	W
Guam	SA	619	10:30	W	Guam	SA	620	10:30	W
Guam	SA	621	11:00	W	Guam	SA	622	11:00	W
Guam	SA	623	11:30	W	Guam	SA	624	11:30	W
Guam	SA	625	12:00	W	Guam	SA	626	12:00	W
Guam	SA	627	12:30	W	Guam	SA	628	12:30	W
Guam	SA	629	13:00	W	Guam	SA	630	13:00	W
Guam	SA	631	13:30	W	Guam	SA	632	13:30	W
Guam	SA	633	14:00	W	Guam	SA	634	14:00	W
Guam	SA	635	14:30	W	Guam	SA	636	14:30	W
Guam	SA	637	15:00	W	Guam	SA	638	15:00	W
Guam	SA	639	15:30	W	Guam	SA	640	15:30	W
Guam	SA	641	16:00	W	Guam	SA	642	16:00	W
Guam	SA	643	16:30	W	Guam	SA	644	16:30	W
Guam	SA	645	17:00	W	Guam	SA	646	17:00	W
Guam	SA	647	17:30	W	Guam	SA	648	17:30	W
Guam	SA	649	18:00	W	Guam	SA	650	18:00	W
Guam	SA	651	18:30	W	Guam	SA	652	18:30	W
Guam	SA	653	19:00	W	Guam	SA	654	19:00	W
Guam	SA	655	19:30	W	Guam	SA	656	19:30	W
Guam	SA	657	20:00	W	Guam	SA	658	20:00	W
Guam	SA	659	20:30	W	Guam	SA	660	20:30	W
Guam	SA	661	21:00	W	Guam	SA	662	21:00	W
Guam	SA	663	21:30	W	Guam	SA	664	21:30	W
Guam	SA	665	22:00	W	Guam	SA	666	22:00	W
Guam	SA	667	22:30	W	Guam	SA	668	22:30	W
Guam	SA	669	23:00	W	Guam	SA	670	23:00	W
Guam	SA	671	23:30	W	Guam	SA	672	23:30	W
Guam	SA	673	00:00	W	Guam	SA	674	00:00	W
Guam	SA	675	00:30	W	Guam	SA	676	00:30	W
Guam	SA	677	01:00	W	Guam	SA	678	01:00	W
Guam	SA	679	01:30	W	Guam	SA	680	01:30	W
Guam	SA	681	02:00	W	Guam	SA	682	02:00	W
Guam	SA	683	02:30	W	Guam	SA	684	02:30	W
Guam	SA	685	03:00	W	Guam	SA	686	03:00	W
Guam	SA	687	03:30	W	Guam	SA	688	03:30	W
Guam	SA	689	04:00	W	Guam	SA	690	04:00	W
Guam	SA	691	04:30	W	Guam	SA	692	04:30	W
Guam	SA	693	05:00	W	Guam	SA	694	05:00	W
Guam	SA	695	05:30	W	Guam	SA	696	05:30	W
Guam	SA	697	06:00	W	Guam	SA	698	06:00	W
Guam	SA	699	06:30	W	Guam	SA	700	06:30	W


PREDEPARTURE AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE									
Time	City	Flight	Time	City	Flight	Time	City	Flight	Time
06:00	Guam	SA 601	06:00	Guam	SA 602	06:30	Guam	SA 603	06:30
06:30	Guam	SA 604	07:00	Guam	SA 605	07:30	Guam	SA 606	07:30
07:00	Guam	SA 607	07:30	Guam	SA 608	08:00	Guam	SA 609	08:00
07:30	Guam	SA 610	08:00	Guam	SA 611	08:30	Guam	SA 612	08:30
08:00	Guam	SA 613	08:30	Guam	SA 614	09:00	Guam	SA 615	09:00
08:30	Guam	SA 616	09:00	Guam	SA 617	09:30	Guam	SA 618	09:30
09:00	Guam	SA 619	09:30	Guam	SA 620	10:00	Guam	SA 621	10:00
09:30	Guam	SA 622	10:00	Guam	SA 623	10:30	Guam	SA 624	10:30
10:00	Guam	SA 625	10:30	Guam	SA 626	11:00	Guam	SA 627	11:00
10:30	Guam	SA 628	11:00	Guam	SA 629	11:30	Guam	SA 630	11:30
11:00	Guam	SA 631	11:30	Guam	SA 632	12:00	Guam	SA 633	12:00
11:30	Guam	SA 634	12:00	Guam	SA 635	12:30	Guam	SA 636	12:30
12:00	Guam	SA 637	12:30	Guam	SA 638	13:00	Guam	SA 639	13:00
12:30	Guam	SA 640	13:00	Guam	SA 641	13:30	Guam	SA 642	13:30
13:00	Guam	SA 643	13:30	Guam	SA 644	14:00	Guam	SA 645	14:00
13:30	Guam	SA 646	14:00	Guam	SA 647	14:30	Guam	SA 648	14:30
14:00	Guam	SA 649	14:30	Guam	SA 650	15:00	Guam	SA 651	15:00
14:30	Guam	SA 652	15:00	Guam	SA 653	15:30	Guam	SA 654	15:30
15:00	Guam	SA 655	15:30	Guam	SA 656	16:00	Guam	SA 657	16:00
15:30	Guam	SA 658	16:00	Guam	SA 659	16:30	Guam	SA 660	16:30
16:00	Guam	SA 661	16:30	Guam	SA 662	17:00	Guam	SA 663	17:00
16:30	Guam	SA 664	17:00	Guam	SA 665	17:30	Guam	SA 666	17:30
17:00	Guam	SA 667	17:30	Guam	SA 668	18:00	Guam	SA 669	18:00
17:30	Guam	SA 670	18:00	Guam	SA 671	18:30	Guam	SA 672	18:30
18:00	Guam	SA 673	18:30	Guam	SA 674	19:00	Guam	SA 675	19:00
18:30	Guam	SA 676	19:00	Guam	SA 677	19:30	Guam	SA 678	19:30
19:00	Guam	SA 679	19:30	Guam	SA 680	20:00	Guam	SA 681	20:00
19:30	Guam	SA 682	20:00	Guam	SA 683	20:30	Guam	SA 684	20:30
20:00	Guam	SA 685	20:30	Guam	SA 686	21:00	Guam	SA 687	21:00
20:30	Guam	SA 688	21:00	Guam	SA 689	21:30	Guam	SA 690	21:30
21:00	Guam	SA 691	21:30	Guam	SA 692	22:00	Guam	SA 693	22:00
21:30	Guam	SA 694	22:00	Guam	SA 695	22:30	Guam	SA 696	22:30
22:00	Guam	SA 697	22:30	Guam	SA 698	23:00	Guam	SA 699	23:00
22:30	Guam	SA 700	23:00	Guam	SA 701	23:30	Guam	SA 702	23:30
23:00	Guam	SA 703	23:30	Guam	SA 704	00:00	Guam	SA 705	00:00
23:30	Guam	SA 706	00:00	Guam	SA 707	00:30	Guam	SA 708	00:30
00:00	Guam	SA 709	00:30	Guam	SA 710	01:00	Guam	SA 711	01:00
00:30	Guam	SA 712	01:00	Guam	SA 713	01:30	Guam	SA 714	01:30
01:00	Guam	SA 715	01:30	Guam	SA 716	02:00	Guam	SA 717	02:00
01:30	Guam	SA 718	02:00	Guam	SA 719	02:30	Guam	SA 720	02:30
02:00	Guam	SA 721	02:30	Guam	SA 722	03:00	Guam	SA 723	03:00
02:30	Guam	SA 724	03:00	Guam	SA 725	03:30	Guam	SA 726	03:30
03:00	Guam	SA 727	03:30	Guam	SA 728	04:00	Guam	SA 729	04:00
03:30	Guam	SA 730	04:00	Guam	SA 731	04:30	Guam	SA 732	04:30
04:00	Guam	SA 733	04:30	Guam	SA 734	05:00	Guam	SA 735	05:00
04:30	Guam	SA 736	05:00	Guam	SA 737	05:30	Guam	SA 738	05:30
05:00	Guam	SA 739	05:30	Guam	SA 740	06:00	Guam	SA 741	06:00
05:30	Guam	SA 742	06:00	Guam	SA 743	06:30	Guam	SA 744	06:30
06:00	Guam	SA 745	06:30	Guam	SA 746	07:00	Guam	SA 747	07:00
06:30	Guam	SA 748	07:00	Guam	SA 749	07:30	Guam	SA 750	07:30


WEATHER FORECAST





PICTURE TIME: 1:00 AM., AUGUST 12, 2004
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

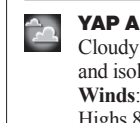
A monsoon trough extends from 24n130e to a weak circulation north of Saipan near 20n147e...then extends northeast to 25n155e. Isolated showers and thunderstorms are found within 50 miles either side of the trough axis from 20n147e to 25n155e. A surface trough stretches south from the weak circulation near 20n147e to another circulation northwest of Chuuk near 10n150e...then continues eastward to near 9n153e. Convergent westerly flow into the trough is producing widespread showers and isolated thunderstorms in an area bounded by 15n138e to 13n145e to 8n141e to 9n136e back to 15n138e...including Yap. Low-level convergence is producing widespread cloudiness and scattered showers across Chuuk and Pohnpei...within 150 miles either side of a line from 3n145e to 8n158e. Trade-wind convergence in eastern Micronesia and the Marshall Islands is producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms between the equator and 12n from 154e to 180...including Kwajalein and Majuro.


**SAIPAN AND TINIAN**
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.
Winds: South at 10-15 mph. Highs 85. Lows 76.


**GUAM AND ROTA**
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.
Winds: South at 10-15 mph. Highs around 85. Lows 76.

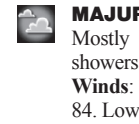
**PALAU**
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.
Winds: West at 20-25 kt. Highs 84. Lows 74.

**POHNPEI**
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.
Winds: North at 10 kt. Highs 85. Lows 76.

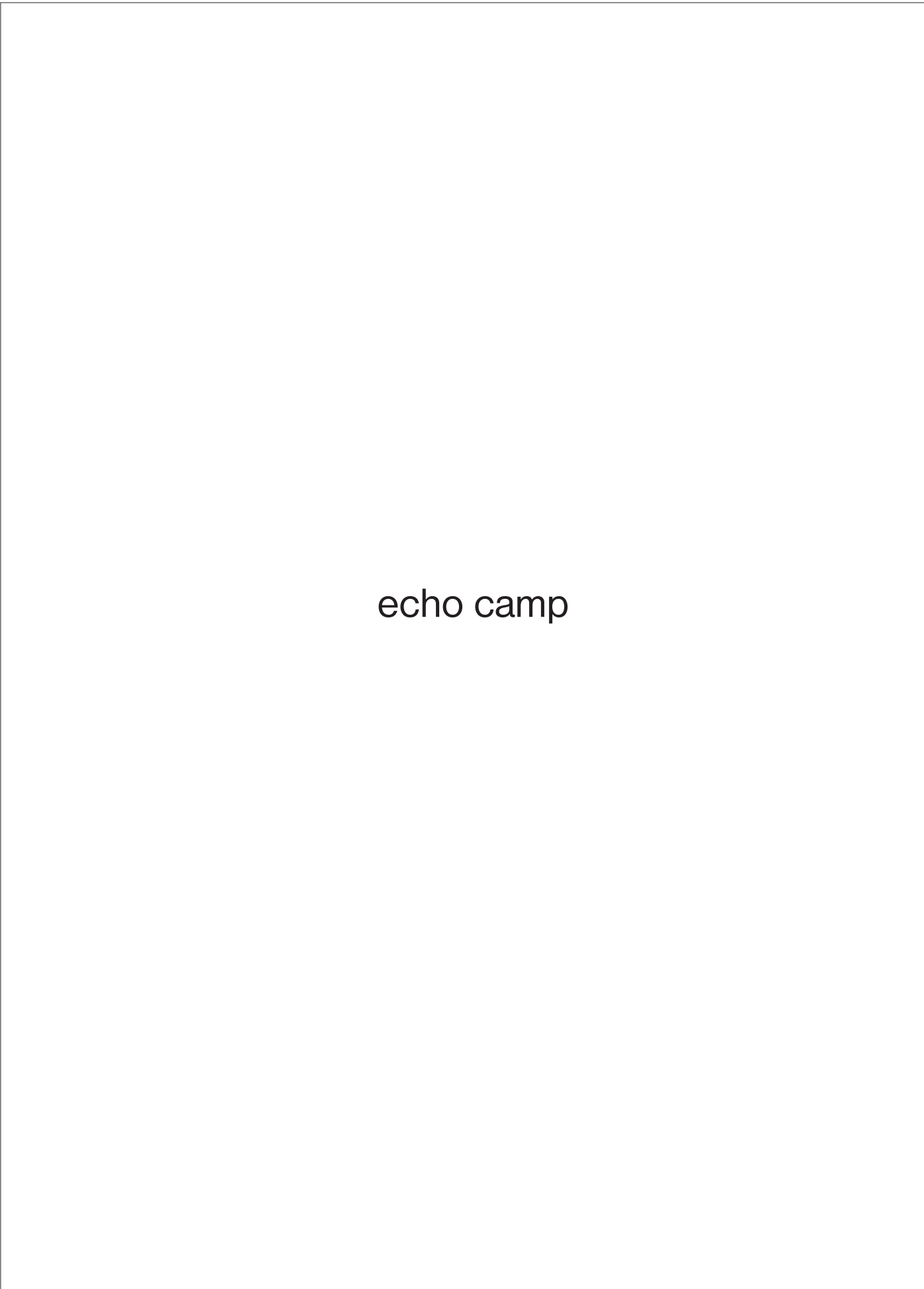
**YAP AND ULITHI**
Cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms.
Winds: West at 20-25 kt. Highs 86. Lows 76.

**KOSRAE**
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.
Winds: East at 10 kt. Highs 77. Lows 75.

**CHUUK**
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms.
Winds: Southwest at 15-20 kt. Highs 79. Lows 77.

**MAJURO**
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.
Winds: East at 5-10 kt. Highs 84. Lows 77.

CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	58F (14C)	48F (9C)
Beijing	Showers	80F (27C)	65F (18C)
Hong Kong	Thunder	91F (33C)	79F (26C)
Honolulu	Sunny	90F (32C)	78F (26C)
London, England	Showers	70F (21C)	59F (15C)
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	82F (28C)	65F (18C)
Manila	Thunder	88F (31C)	80F (27C)
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	60F (16C)	49F (9C)
Miami	Thunder	89F (32C)	78F (26C)
New York City	Rain	76F (24C)	66F (19C)
Osaka	Sunny	82F (28C)	70F (21C)
Paris	Showers	68F (20C)	46F (8C)
Pusan	Sunny	88F (31C)	75



NMC bookstore limits charges to \$500

By CASSIE DLG FEJERAN
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

The Northern Marianas College bookstore is limiting student book charges to just \$500 for each student from August through September.

According to bookstore manager Tricia Benavente, students on scholarships can charge books and supplies at a maximum of \$500 only.

“I met with the students and agreed that they can charge at least notebooks and pens, as long as they don’t exceed \$500 with essential supplies and books,” she said.

The bookstore will have on hand a tentative listing of the students receiving the federal Pell grant from the Financial Aid Office. A listing of CNMI Scholarship recipients will also be available at the bookstore for students

charging under their Educational Assistance Program Scholarship.

Students with pending Pell grants would have to meet with Ray Basa, director of the Financial Aid Office, to determine if they are eligible for the grant.

“We need to have an estimate amount to know what to charge under. If the student wishes to use their EAP, what we’ll do is look at the list [from the scholarship office]. They can charge under their Pell or scholarship,” said Benavente.

Students are required to bring a copy of their EAP Scholarship award letter to charge books under the CNMI Scholarship.

“They will have to present their student ID, passport, or driver’s licenses and school registration form each time they charge,” said Benavente.

The bookstore is limited in the supplies it can release on a charge basis due to the Pell grant reim-

bursement status of the college.

According to Benavente, with assistance from the college’s finance department, the bookstore received funds for a majority of the books that arrived on Wednesday.

“We managed to get majority of the books as of [Wednesday] so we are looking good. I can’t say that we have a 100 percent of the books here, but we have worked with the finance office to help purchase the required books for the bookstore. Without Raaj [finance director] and my staff this would have not happen,” said Benavente.

The bookstore has tentatively set the deadline for charging books and supplies under the Pell grant on Sept. 30. Benavente said that all returns or charges should be made by Sept. 30. For returns, students must present their receipts and books must be in good condition.

Over 80 students attend NMC orientation

Northern Marianas College president Antonio Deleon Guerrero, along with several faculty members and chairpersons of the various departments, welcomed over 80 students on Wednesday during their first day of orientation at the student center.

Dean for Student Development Kurt Barnes and officers of the Associated Students of NMC—president Jack Kiyoshi, vice president Agatha Ketebengang, secretary Nathan Algaier, and treasurer Jocelyn Tagabuel—also shared the privilege to welcome the students on campus.

The orientation included a digital slideshow presentation from the Office of Student Activities and Leadership, featuring annual events held at the college.

The students were toured around campus, including a visit to the NMC bookstore, counseling, career center, cantina, president’s office, library, office of admissions record and financial aid, student support services, TV and film studio, computer lab, and the gym.

Members of the Volunteers Club led the ROPES team building exercises, conducted by Ed Calvo at the gym.

“It was great; things went the way they were planned,” said Janet Santiago, volunteers club member.

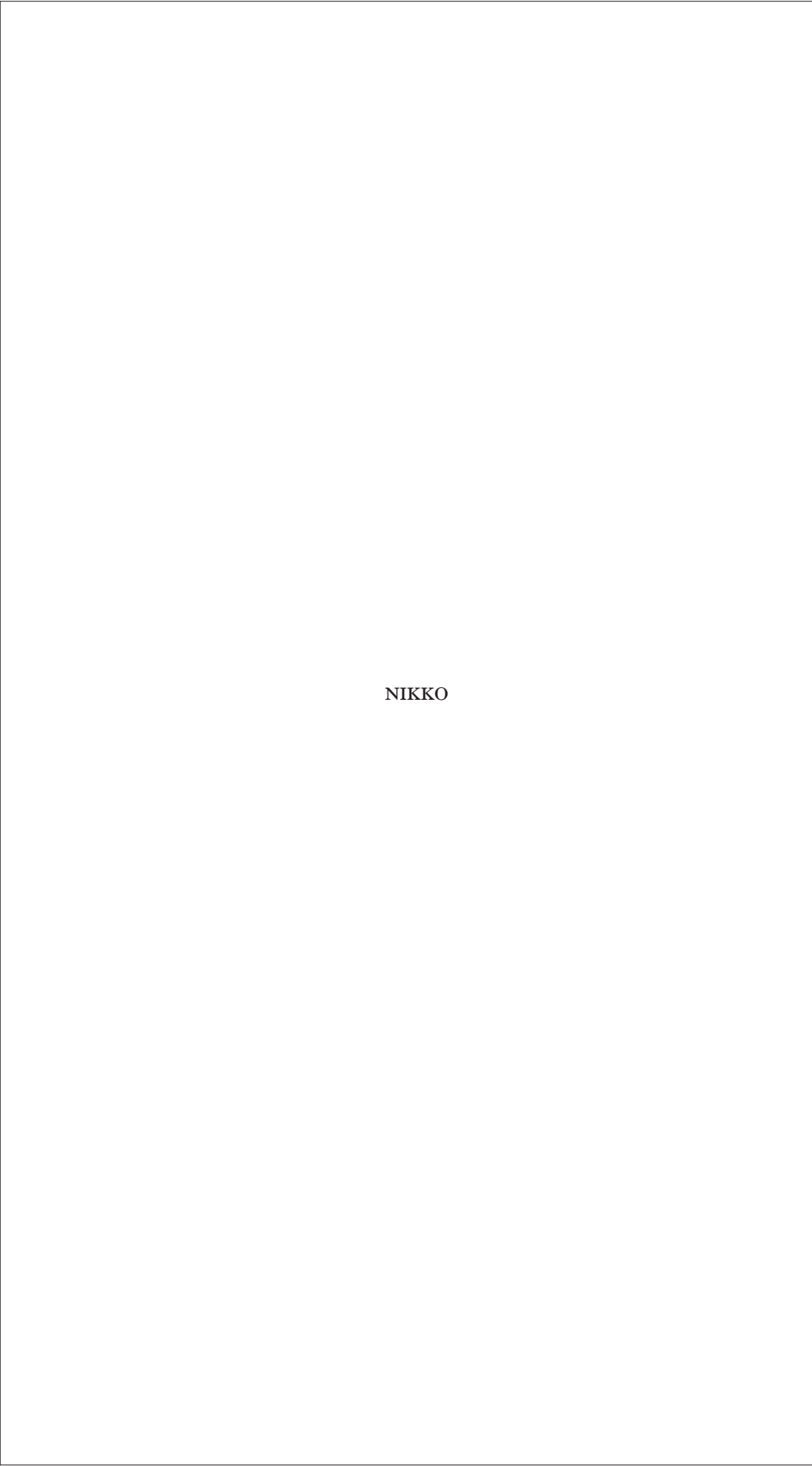
The Phi Theta Kappa officers presented the students with information about their club and introduced the officers. Representing the PTK were treasurer Randy Mendoza, vice president Tatiana

Babauta, public relations secretary Lucy Henry, and membership secretary Leung See Cabrera.

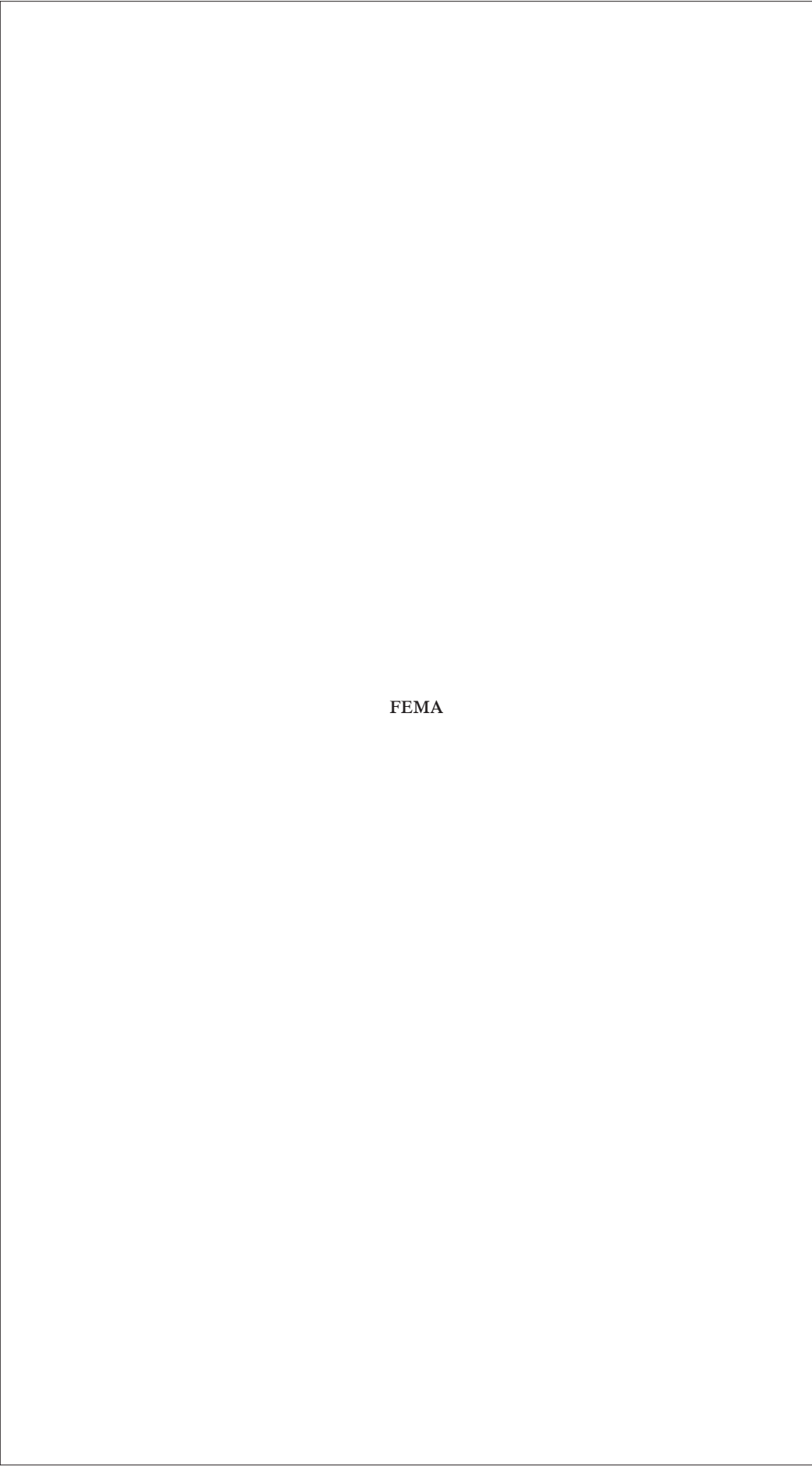
Also included in the activity was the NMC student email sign-up so that students can be informed of activities and issues facing the college through their email account.

Larry Lee, acting department chair for the School of Business, and Ace Elameto provided entertainment during the barbeque get-together with faculty and students. The orientation ended yesterday.

“This was one of the best turnouts for orientation. We had over 80 students that attended the orientation on both days,” said Edwin Propst, director of Student Activities and Leadership. **(Cassie DLG Fejeran)**



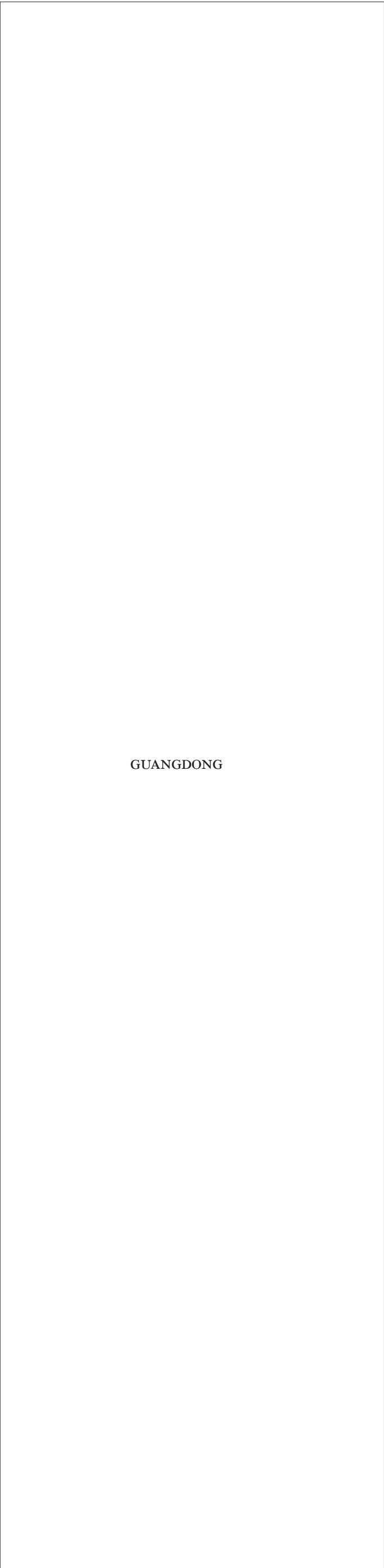
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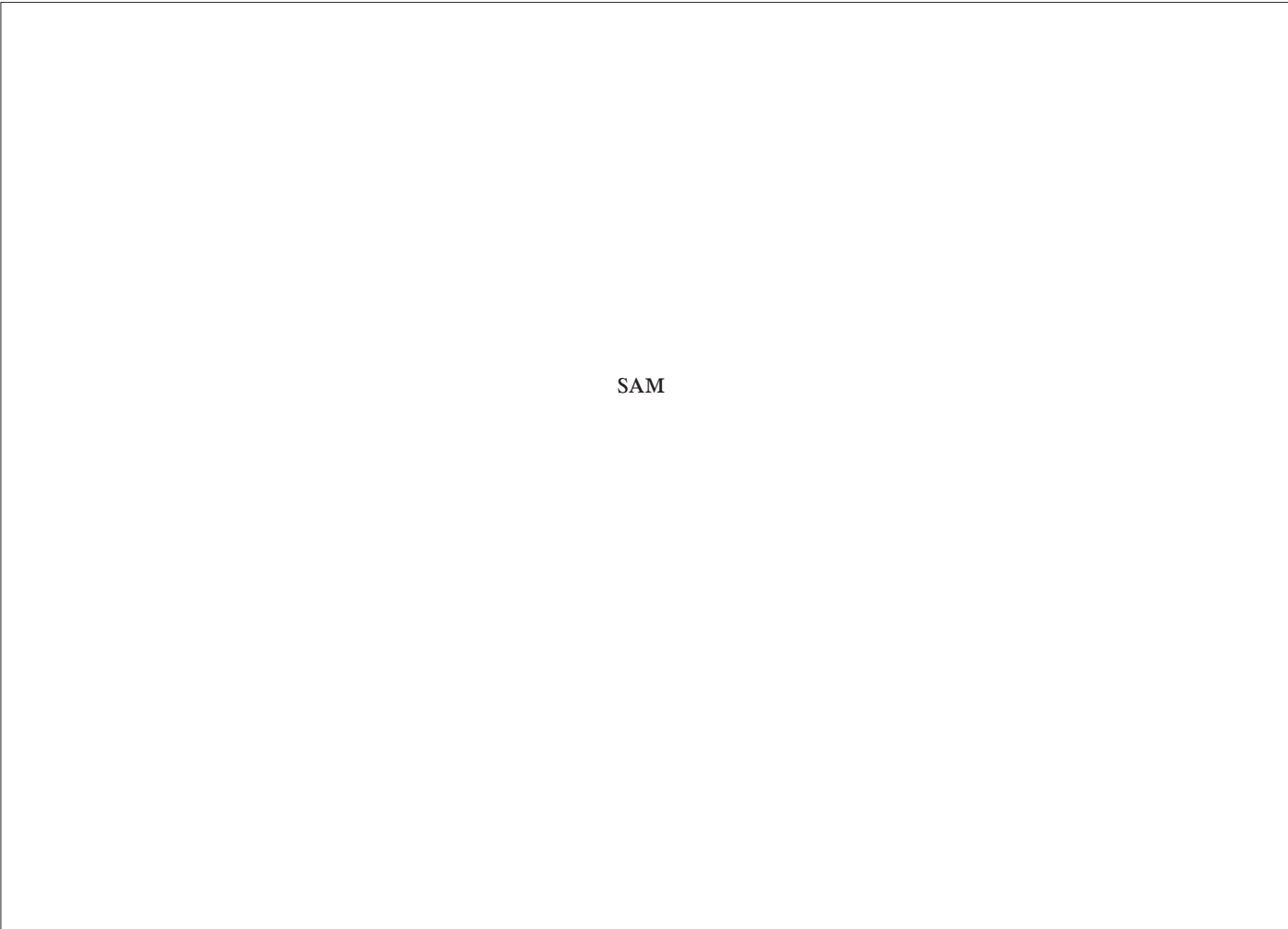
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Opinion

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIV, Issue No. 163

Published daily at 2/F Century Insurance Building,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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Pacific Islands News Association

Letters to the Editor

Saipan Tribune welcomes contributions. All letters intended for publication must include the writer's name, address and, if possible, fax or telephone number. Letters are edited for space, clarity and fairness.

By ED STEPHENS

Ed Stephens, Jr. is an economist and columnist for the Saipan Tribune.
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By MOHAMMAD ASHRAF, PH.D.

Ashraf is an International Resource Economist. He is solely responsible for the views expressed in this column and doesn't represent the views of Saipan Tribune. His email address is ashmdr@hotmail.com



Babauta holds second workplace safety conference

Occupational health and safety issues, fire prevention, food safety, and sanitation are key issues that will be tackled in next week's holding of the Governor's 2nd Annual Conference on Health and Safety on Saipan.

"We had a very successful conference last year and we're looking forward to making this year as successful, if not even more successful, than last year's," he said yesterday.

He said in particular that fire prevention and fire evacuation would be among the highlights, although it is not a major problem in the CNMI.

"Thank God, we've not had any major fire here. We don't want that

to happen. So these are all preventive measures," he said.

He said the conference would also tackle topics on improving public safety, driving, drug abuse prevention, violence in the workplace, and the like.

There will also be a presentation on safe drinking water.

He said he has met with members of the business community and public agencies in preparation for the conference.

The governor said that while the conference involves a lot of the private sector, he wants to see more participation from the Public School System. He said the conference also focuses on safety in schools during disasters and emergencies.

The conference, to be held on Aug. 17 to 20 at Dai Ichi Hotel, is sponsored by the Northern Marianas Alliance for Safety and Health.

NMASH said it expects a larger audience this time with its greater focus on certification for the sessions' attendees.

NMASH, with trainers and presenters from OSHA Region IX in San Francisco, the OSHA Institute in Illinois and local CNMI government, will conduct simultaneous construction industry and general industry tracks over a three-day period.

Last year, the conference was attended by about 200 participants. (*Liberty Dones*)

Dead fish follow mine flushing in PNG

PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea (PNG Post-Courier/PIR)—Dead fish, some of them floating in from deep waters, have raised concern among the Misima people and their leaders in Milne Bay, Papua New Guinea.

Placer Dome Resources, the recently departed developers of Misima mine, has advised villages not to eat any of the dead fish after noticing them on Saturday.

The mining company has done preliminary tests on seawater samples and also collected 35 dead fish, including red emperors, tuna and cod. It has cut relevant samples of the fish, which will be sent to Brisbane for further tests.

Waigani is also taking the incident seriously.

Mining Minister Sam Akoitai said yesterday he had instructed the Mining Department to work closely with the Department of Environment and Conservation to carry out an independent investigation.

The dead fish followed flushing of the last remaining sodium cyanide from the mine, mixed with 450 cubic meters per hour of seawater, before being discharged down the tailings line.

What is baffling is why this had not happened 24 hours earlier in an earlier flushing.

Milne Bay provincial administrator Henry Bailasi had not yet sighted a report on the matter but deplored the carelessness.

"Obviously we don't accept that kind of thing," Bailasi said.

"They have to be careful. If it is true then we completely deplore the carelessness of whoever that is responsible."

Two Misima leaders yesterday used the incident to accuse the Misima mine and the National Government of being negligent in the discharge if their promises under the 1990 agreements that paved the way for the Misima Mine Gold project.

CDA

From Page 1

CDA, I must strongly appeal to the people in general that any debt owed must ultimately be paid back," Quitugua said.

"To the clients of CDA who deserve and present realistic repayment ability or any other financial capability for a loan work out—these are the clients [the] CDA must protect," he said. "The staff and management welcome all clients to come in especially those who are facing financial difficulties."

He said the CDA would welcome efforts to make loan repayments, no

matter how minimal the amounts might be.

With the high delinquency rate right now, Quitugua said the CDA vehemently opposes any proposal for write-offs, especially for delinquent borrowers who did not exercise fiscal responsibility. He said the CDA could only entertain the possibility of more flexible payment terms to alleviate these borrowers' financial condition.

"To those clients who want to take advantage of CDA merely as an institution of last resort, I believe throughout the history of CDA, the institution has been very accommodating to each and

every one of you. Let us all look at oneself in terms of personal management, and strive to make the best of what we have. After all, CDA can only re-loan funds which are collected from our borrowers," he added.

Among the more prominent CDA borrowers is businessman Ronald Sablan, the owner of the beleaguered Pacific Gardenia Hotel and the president of the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The CDA is pursuing on the collection of over \$2.4 million in unpaid loans and interests by Sablan and his family's Sy's Corp.

VISITOR

From Page 1

vente said in a media release. For both comparisons, though, figures showed improvement in the number of inbound visitors this year.

The month's performance is the sixth consecutive month that visitor arrivals posted growth compared with last year's monthly totals.

The CNMI's premier market, Japan, showed vigor when it recorded some 32,037 Japanese visitors coming into the Northern Marianas last month, while the surging China market showed the highest percentage growth rate of 368 percent compared with July 2003's total visitors.

Japanese arrivals went up by 42 percent compared with July 2003's 22,569. Compared with July 2002 statistics, the MVA said the market registered a 26-percent growth.

Citing a Japan Association of Travel Agents survey monitoring the business climate in the Asian country's travel industry, the MVA said Japanese outbound travel would further improve in the coming months.

"In the first five months of the year, departures from Japan climbed 21.05 percent to a provisional total

of 6,203,496. This figure is just 1.11 percent behind the pace set in 2002, clearly illustrating that the outbound market is making a strong recovery," the MVA said.

"According to the latest semi-annual survey of Japan's outbound air seat capacity conducted by Weekly Travel Journal, the number of weekly seats this summer reaches 692,169, surpassing the all-time count set in the 2002-2003 winter schedules by some 26,000 seats. The capacity is a 45.65-percent increase from the previous year's summer schedule, and also represents a rise of 5.5 percent compared [with] the summer 2002 schedule," the MVA added.

Benavente cited projections that the capacity would even reach 700,000 by the time the next winter survey is conducted, as new airlines plan to operate at Kansai Airport later this year and at the Central Japan International Airport or Chubu airport near Nagoya in Feb. 2005.

The MVA also said Japanese outbound travel is expected to rise before and after the Summer Olympic Games in Athens, Greece this month, although travel is expected for European destinations.

Visitors from China totaled 3,742 last month, leaping by 368 percent from July 2003's 799. Compared with

July 2002 figures, the China market's growth remained a strong 165 percent, even if the CNMI still awaits the Chinese government's approval of its Approved Destination Status application.

"This increase was contributed by the biweekly charter flights brought in by China Eastern Air. The added charter flights began on July 10, 2004 and utilized the A300 aircraft with a 269-seat capacity," Benavente said.

Korean visitors totaled 7,298 last month, slightly higher by 2 percent from July 2003's 7,140. The MVA noted, however, that the total dropped by 6 percent compared to July 2002 figures.

Visitor arrivals from the U.S. and Guam reached 1,125 and 1,680 last month. The figures went down by 21 and 4 percent, respectively, compared with July 2003's totals—but improved by 10 and 20 percent compared with the same month in 2002.

The number of tourists from Hong Kong and Taiwan reached 193 and 68, respectively, which slightly decreased by 5 and 9 percent compared with last year's statistics. When compared with 2002 figures, the decline becomes even higher at 58 and 48 percent.

Filipino tourists who came to the CNMI last month totaled 429, only one visitor higher than last year's total.

CHC starts parking lot expansion

The office of Public Health Secretary James U. Hofschneider said yesterday that the expansion of the Commonwealth Health Center's parking lot has begun.

Project contractor AIC Marianas Inc. has begun work on the western (lower) side facing Chalan Pale Arnold and will be followed by work on the southern and eastern side (near the emergency entrance) of the CHC Complex.

The current parking lot has a capacity of 232 vehicles (with seven handicap parking). This project will increase

the number of parking spaces by 62 percent (378, including 16 handicap parking spaces) and is expected to last no more than eight months. The length of the project is due to the contractor's scheduling so as not to inconvenience CHC patrons and staff.

"CHC and the contractor will continue to keep the public informed on a regular basis as to the parking areas affected," the statement said. "We ask the public for their patience and cooperation during this time and we have asked employees to consider carpooling."

UP Alumni raffle drawing tomorrow

The University of the Philippines Alumni Association-CNMI Chapter will hold its raffle drawing tomorrow, Saturday, 6pm at the OWWA Office in Nauru Building, Susupe.

Proceeds of the fundraising event

will be used in UPAA's "Donate a Classroom" Project in the Philippines, and recognize and support deserving CNMI students.

Those who have not yet purchased tickets are encouraged to do so.

COMPACT

From Page 1

see if that's permissible. There may be problems. We will certainly consider it but it may not be possible," he had said.

Babauta said yesterday that the Compact money will be shared among the Public School System, Department of Public Health, Public Safety, and Northern Marianas College.

"I need to figure out how...to distribute this funding but it's my sense that the priorities lie with PSS, DPH, DPS, and NMC. These are the four entities that need most funding attention," he said.

This developed as the Legislature adopted recently a joint resolution asking the governor to allocate the funds to PSS. It cited PSS reports that there are 516 students from freely as-

sociated states right now.

"PSS has shouldered annual impact costs of \$5.615 million for these students," the resolution said, adding that such projection includes operational costs, busing, and classrooms.

"It does not include the impact costs of additional personnel for non-teaching and teaching positions required at each school site," said the resolution.

The CNMI expects to get over \$5 million in Compact money this year and every year for the next 20 years.

The Compact legislation provides that \$30 million will be divided each year for the next 20 years among the Northern Marianas, Guam, Hawaii and American Samoa to help these jurisdictions deal with the effects of migration from the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau and the Marshall Islands, commonly known as the freely associated states.

ABSENTEE

From Page 1

troops. Babauta is company commander of Echo Company, 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry, under which the local soldiers belong.

Sablan said the briefing is slated for 9am, Monday, at the U.S. Army Reserve Center in Puerto Rico, Saipan.

CEC staff will brief the troops on the timelines, procedures and requirements for voting by absentee ballot for the Nov. 5, 2005, election.

Sablan added that troop members who need to register or re-register to vote in Commonwealth elections can do so at the briefing.

The NMI election law requires the commission to remove the name of a registered voter from the election register if that person did not vote in the preceding general election. Thus, all registered voters who failed to vote in the 2003 general election must re-register to be eligible to vote in the 2005 election.

Sablan, however, reminded the troops who wish to register or re-register to bring at least one of the documents necessary to determine their U.S. citizenship or national status.

The accepted documents include a current U.S. passport, a birth certificate, a naturalization certificate, or a certificate of citizenship. Commissioned officers could use their military

identification card as evidence of their U.S. citizenship.

"We are doing this as a service to our soldiers, knowing that they may not be here for the next election. As CNMI residents, they are all entitled to vote," Sablan said in an interview.

Absentee voting will be held simultaneously with the elections in the CNMI. Absentee ballots must reach the U.S. Post Office in Chalan Kanoa at 12pm on Nov. 19, 2005.

Offices that are up for election in 2005 include governor and lieutenant governor, senators, representatives, mayors, and municipal council members.

As of Aug. 4, 2004, there were 11,610 registered voters in the CNMI. The biggest number of voters come from the first election district, with 4,482 voters. District No. 1 covers San Antonio, San Vicente, Koblerville, Kagman, and Northern Marianas College.

The second election district, which includes Chalan Kanoa and Susupe, posted 771 voters. The third district, covering San Jose, Garapan and the Northern Islands, has 2,272 voters.

There are 1,828 registered voters from Tanapag, San Roque, and Capitol Hill, which compose the fourth district. Tinian has 956 voters while Rota has 1,301 voters.

The voter registration period for the 2005 general election will end on Sept. 16, 2005.

On demise of indigenous language

The gradual death of the indigenous language, especially Chamorro, has its own history. It has nothing to do with ethnic diversity though it’s a convenient scapegoat depicting shallow and hollow local reactions against non-indigenous people.

If my memory serves me right, the last time I was taught Chamorro was in second grade or 1958 and I am honored to salute my former teacher, Mrs. Merced T. Torres, for teaching this pupil his basic written Chamorro. Like any course, instruction is 20 percent, the rest is up to each student.

As we moved through junior and senior high school, there was the silent policy to encourage indigenous students to

speak, read and write in English. The effort was to improve their oral and written English facility before graduation from high school. English lessons began at the third grade or at least that was the case in our school days. There were penalties imposed solely for purposes of encouraging indigenous students to improve their verbal and written English facility. This quiet policy did superbly well in getting indigenous students to think in English when doing schoolwork. In our quest to do so, Chamorro and Carolinian was placed in the back burner. The revival of the written and spoken Chamorro begins at home. No amount of federal or local funds would succeed in its revival if it

isn’t taught at home. Formal instruction ought to be supplementary in that the best venue to teaching one’s native tongue is at home. It begins, again, with the self. And it should be taught at home with a sense of pride. The demise of the Chamorro language is similar to Latin. It will eventually disappear with time and only those who speak and write it will benefit by perpetuating the indigenous culture. The issue doesn’t need federal nor local grants to revive it. It begins at home!

John S. DelRosario, Jr.
Koblerville

NMC train could be heading for the Marianas Trench

The recent discussion by NMC officials with CNMI lawmaker Justo Quitugua (D-Saipan and chair of the House Committee on Education) regarding the move of the entire As Terlaje campus to the La Fiesta facility in San Rogue, and the projected cost of \$6 million for renovation and \$3 million for classroom equipment, clearly shows that the priorities of the NMC leadership, who are vested with making prudent policy decisions for the welfare and stability of the college and students, may not be established in proper order. Since the college has been now warned by both the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, as well as the Senior Commission for Schools and Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges over the past 60 days regarding financial instability and maintaining viability and sustainability of academic programs, e.g., baccalaureate program in elementary education, one might presume that the highest priority of the college leadership would be to “focus” on removing the institution from its financial dilemma and restoring accreditation with WASC, instead of putting forth efforts to establish “an aesthetic campus” while increasing the debt level of NMC in excess of \$15 million, i.e., \$2 million existing deficit; \$4 million plus interest outstanding balance and the \$9 million projected to be needed to allow the La Fiesta Mall to function as a campus. Removing NMC from financial instability and restoring accreditation will be crucial in terms of maintaining qualifications to receive and issue federal Pell grants for the students, as well as enabling the ones who matriculate for a two-year degree to transfer to an accredited four-year public or private institution of higher education located in the mainland. If the college leadership places another \$9 million of debt onto the existing outstanding balance of \$4 million plus interest, and the \$2 million deficit regarding annual budgets, then the overall amount that will be needed to be paid back will be about \$15 million plus

interest if the \$9 million is borrowed. The total pay back with interest on a 20-year note (timeframe of 20 year payback is taken from the payback timeframe for the \$4 million outstanding balance on La Fiesta) for \$15 million will be nearly \$26 million. And the annual payments that will be necessary to pay back this amount will be four times the \$200,000 plus interest which NMC is currently obligated to pay back annually for the next 20 years. Where will the funds come from to pay back an annual obligation for the La Fiesta operational costs and outstanding loans that will be in the vicinity of \$1.75 million a year? The NMC Board of Regents is obligated to give the island community answers to these questions since the college is a publicly supported institution of higher education. The college is currently faced with the dilemma of not having the monetary resources to pay the monthly operational costs of \$50,000 (\$600,000 per annum), as well as the annual payment of \$200,000 plus interest on the \$4 million outstanding balance from the \$7.5 million La Fiesta transaction made in 2003 and the NMC leadership is still talking about moving and needing more funds to accomplish their plans. It would be naïve to think that the WASC officials will not question the issue of the college incurring more debt and/or making plans when there aren’t any monetary resources in the college coffers. If the college continues to accumulate more debt and remains unstable fiscally, this would no doubt prompt more pressure from WASC officials. It is highly probable that the college would either be placed on “probation”, or be compelled to “show cause” in terms of why WASC should allow the institution to continue being accredited subsequent to being on probation for more than two years. These guidelines are stipulated by the federal government and WASC must comply with adhering to them. The other important issue that must be raised involves the Com-

monwealth Constitutional mandate stipulating the prior approval by the CNMI 14th Legislature of any additional debt that is incurred by NMC. Before the NMC BOR proceeds with any thinking and/or planning regarding incurring any additional debt, it first must be evaluated and approved by the members of both the House and Senate of the 14th Legislature. To do anything otherwise flies in the face of what the Commonwealth Constitution says. For the NMC leadership to move toward making a decision about incurring more debt without adhering to what the Commonwealth Constitution dictates and bringing it before lawmakers of the NMI, as well as the island community, might be problematic inasmuch as it is in defiance of the laws governing the CNMI. The Institute of International Education conducted a study during the last quarter of 2003 and found that tightened visa procedures enacted after the 2001 terrorist attacks in New York have delayed the entry of many foreigners into the United States. Consequently, this has contributed to a foreign student enrollment increase of only 0.6 percent compared to 6.4 percent prior to 9/11. Because of the arduousness of obtaining visa clearance to attend institutions of higher education in the mainland, qualified foreign students are now attending institutions in England and Australia where enrollments for foreign students have increased and exceeded 30 percent over the past two years. The loss in revenues to the U.S. national economy and colleges and universities from what the estimated 600,000 foreign students expend while pursuing undergraduate and graduate degrees is projected to fall from \$12 billion to \$9 billion annually. It needs to be underscored that the existing foreign students enrolled at NMC will not be able to successfully transfer any and all of their academic credits and courses to “any” accredited public or private institution of higher education in the United States if the college loses its accreditation status with WASC. Although this situation may not be as severe as the “Saipan University” debacle where students lost their tuition money, as well as their privilege to pursue educational programs at SU, it is a very serious matter when foreign students are not able to pursue a four-year degree because the college they attended for an associate of arts or science degree is “not accredited” by a legitimate and recognized accreditation association approved by the U.S. Department of Education. In 2002, the former NMC president said that the “relaxed” visa standards of the NMI, as well as an “attractive campus”, would draw foreign students to pursue degrees at NMC and “millions of dollars in tuition revenues” would be realized. Since the former president’s proclamation, there have only been five to ten additional qualified foreign students enrolled at NMC and the college is besieged with some serious financial turmoil. Because qualified foreign students are now flocking to renowned universities in England and Australia, it doesn’t appear that the lackluster numbers involving foreign students coming to the CNMI to study will increase by any drastic margins in the near or distant future. The serious problem involving the financial instability of the college and maintaining accreditation status with WASC can be easily resolved with decisions that will effectively eliminate the debt level of NMC and allow it to commence with planning that will reflect “stabilization” and enable the college to move forward with progression, as opposed to digression. Dr. Jack Angelo’s recent and prudent recommendation to sell the La Fiesta Mall and use the proceeds to remove the college from remaining entrenched in a financial quagmire should be taken under serious advisement by the NMC leadership. Should the leadership not heed to Dr. Angelo’s advice and make the decision to increase the deficit of the college to \$15 million (\$26 million with interest), then they should be prepared for the inevitable consequence of the college being placed in the predicament of filing Chapter 7 (bankruptcy) and possibly being asked to shutdown it’s operation and close the doors. It does not have to be this way and college leadership has the power to prevent this catastrophe from becoming a reality. To go with the decision of incurring more debt amid the warnings that have been issued by WASC is essentially gambling with the future stability of higher education in the CNMI when the odds that the college will come out on top and be able to adequately sustain providing higher education for the present and future students of the island community, are not very favorable. The destiny of the college is in the hands of the NMC BOR and should they not make the right decisions, then the NMC train will be destined for the Marianas Trench.

Dr. Jesus D. Camacho
Delano, California

JOETEN MOTORS KIA
+BLUE

Business



Pacific Islands Club's Food and Beverage director Steve Balakrishna, fourth from right, joins his staff at the Seaside Grill.

BING CHAVEZ

PIC'S SEASIDE GRILL
New mouthwatering delights at PIC

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

Saipan's favorite sunset hangout—the Seaside Grill restaurant at the Pacific Islands Club—is expanding its operations to offer an array of international cuisine for local residents and tourists so they could enjoy a sumptuous lunch at affordable prices by the scenic San Antonio beach.

With New York-trained chef Robert Stern joining PIC as its new executive chef, the restaurant vows to offer guests with unique food preparations, including world-renowned cuisine that have become favorites at the U.S. state.

As the saying goes in New Orleans—Laissez les bon temps rouler—the good times will roll at the Seaside Grill at noontime, when the restaurant launches its lunch menu on Aug. 23, a la carte style.

The restaurant's ambiance is itself relaxing, with its bamboo-motif setting overlooking Saipan's blue waters. Add to this the taste of food especially prepared through Cajun-style cooking and patrons will surely revel in the sensory overload.

At the restaurant, one can enjoy the "dirty rice," which comes with a mix of ground beef and spices. Its Pulled Chicken with Grilled Tomato and Shaved Red Onion will certainly give a new variation to the traditional chicken sandwich. Seaside Grill also offers pita bread with cheese and beef filling.

The Korean-style "Bibimbap"—barbecued beef with spicy ginger vegetables, and soy sauce, and rice topped with fried egg—will surely be satisfying, while the Roast Beef and Carmelized Onion Wrap with Pickled Vegetables appeals like Indian-style shawarma.

Stern said the lunch menu includes an array of Western and Asian cuisine. "Being on the islands surrounded by waters, we'll give seafood," he added.

The Seafood Salad with Daitkon, Carrot and Green Onion with Lemon Dressing has a mix of shrimps, mussels, squid and green vegetables.

Besides an array of salads, sandwiches and wraps, and barbecue selections, Seaside Grill also has variations of pastas to choose from, including the Linguine with Baby Shrimp, Clams and Broccoli in a White Wine Broth, as well as the Penne with Chicken Bolognese and Green Onion.

One can conclude the meal by ordering dessert such as the healthful Sliced Fruit Platter with Feta [Greek] Cheese or the Apple Cobbler, a kind of pastry topped with sautéed apples and cinnamon. The restaurant has a kids' menu that lists sandwiches, pasta and dessert designed to please children's tastes.

PIC's director of Food and Beverage, Steve Balakrishna, said the upcoming lunch at the Seaside Grill is part of the hotel's thrust to tap the local market.

"What we want to do really is to attract our local residents," Balakrishna said. "PIC has always been a local hangout."

Last Saturday, the restaurant had a soft opening of the lunch menu, serving hotel guests. For two consecutive days alone, the lunch had about 60 customers, even though the soft opening entailed no announcement. Balakrishna said lunch would be served from 11am to 2pm daily.

Seaside Grill has become a favorite sunset hangout on the island, serving food and drinks by the beach in San Antonio. It remains open from 5pm to 7pm for sunset, and from 6pm to 9pm for dinner.



BING CHAVEZ

PIC's executive chef Robert Stern, fourth from left, and staff pose for the lens. From left to right: Bhoyet, June Evangelista, Rudy Gatela, Stern, Bert Mampote, and Gines Hingpit.

brown tree snake

DIAL RENT



STAR & STRIPES



verizon
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club jama

labor

marpac

nmhc

jws

Bush raps Kerry on Iraq troop reduction

By SCOTT LINDLAW
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP)—President Bush on Wednesday pushed back against John Kerry’s criticism of his handling of Iraq, saying, “I know what I’m doing when it comes to winning this war.” Bush used a re-election rally to sharply reject Democratic challenger John Kerry’s proposal to begin to withdraw troops from Iraq within six months of taking office.

“We all want the mission to be completed as quickly as possible. But we want the mission completed,” the president said. “The mission is not going to be completed as quickly as possible if the enemy thinks we will be removing a substantial number of troops in six months.”

Military commanders should be deciding troop levels, Bush said.

“I know what I’m doing when it comes to winning this war, and I’m not going to be sending

mixed signals,” he said. Kerry spokesman Phil Singer said Bush will “say or do anything to avoid a discussion about his failed policy in Iraq.”

“One thing we know for sure is that the troops are going to be in Iraq for a lot longer under George Bush than they will be with John Kerry as president,” Singer said.

Bush also responded to rising criticism, some from fellow Republicans like Nancy Reagan, of his decision three years ago this week to cap federal funding for stem cell studies. Reagan has lobbied for more government funding for the research, which she says could yield a cure for Alzheimer’s.

The president said he would not relax his policy, though he acknowledged that it is “sad” when parents believe a cure for their children’s ailments could be within reach.

“The policies I made were on the one hand trying to help as best as we can move science

forward, and at the same time keep an ethical balance so that we promote a culture of life,” Bush said.

“The decision I made, in my judgment, was the right decision,” he said.

Bush’s remarks came at the start of a campaign swing through New Mexico and Arizona, two states he and Kerry have been contesting most fiercely. He lost New Mexico by just 366 votes and Wednesday marked his eighth trip.

After showing Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., his Texas ranch Wednesday morning, Bush

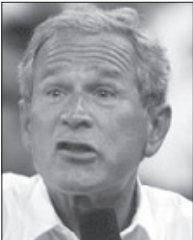
headed out for a second day of campaigning with the war hero and one-time Bush rival. McCain did not say anything at the

New Mexico rally, in contrast to their trip through Florida Tuesday, where he introduced Bush at each stop.

The two men then went to Arizona, which Bush narrowly won in 2000.

McCain revved up his hometown crowd in Phoenix, telling a Bush rally that “because of what we did in Iraq, the world is safer and America is safer.”

“President Bush has not wavered, he will not waver,” Mc-



Bush

Cain said. “We will win this war on terror.”

In New Mexico, Bush spoke in one of his favorite campaign forums, which the White House bills as a town hall forum and calls “Ask President Bush.”

The president roamed a square about the size of a boxing ring inside an aircraft manufacturer. One jet was left on the plant’s floor, its nose pointing straight at Bush. Bush joked that he and McCain, both former fighter pilots, would take the plane out for a spin.

The event allowed fervent Bush backers to ask the president questions. But in keeping with Bush’s custom, most of the event was devoted to a speech

by Bush and then to testimonials from people hand-picked by the White House extolling the virtues of his policies.

The queries put to Bush in the question-and-answer session were never hard-hitting, and were often not questions at all.

Sample questions on Wednesday:

- Can I take a picture with you?
- Can I introduce you to my wife and mother in law?
- I want you to know that I’m praying for you.

When several of Bush’s questioners predicted he would win re-election in a landslide, Bush said he’d be happy to win narrowly. “Let’s win the thing. Let’s just win it,” he said.

...while Kerry accuse Bush of blocking cheap drug imports

HENDERSON, Nev. (AP)—Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry said President Bush is standing in the way of lower drug prices for cash-strapped seniors by refusing to allow prescription imports from Canada.

Kerry launched a new push for support from senior citizens by trying to persuade them that Bush will hurt their bottom line with his prescription drug policies and efforts to privatize Social Security.

Kerry said Bush is standing in the way of bipartisan efforts in Congress to allow drug imports from Canada. He compared the prices of popular drugs in the United States and Canada, noting they were close to more than twice as expensive stateside.

“George Bush stood right there and said, ‘Nope, we’re not going to help people to have lower cost drugs in America, we’re going to help the big drug companies get a great big wind-fall,’” Kerry said.

“It’s a monopoly and it’s been put in place by George Bush and his friends and it’s costing you a whole bunch of extra money and it’s wrong,” he added.

Bush’s campaign accused Kerry of making false charges against the president. For instance, they said, Bush’s opposes importation from Canada because of safety concerns. The White House has said it would be virtually impossible to ensure

that drugs being imported are approved by the Food and Drug Administration and not counterfeit.

Also, Bush does not support privatization of Social Security for today’s seniors. He wants to give younger workers the option of putting part of their payroll tax into personal retirement accounts, giving them a chance to make a higher return on that investment in return for smaller Social Security benefits.

Bush spokesman Steve Schmidt said the president secured through Congress the biggest improvement in senior health care since Medicare was established. He said Kerry’s “scare tactics aren’t going to earn him the trust of America’s seniors.”

Seniors are one of the most closely divided group of voters in presidential politics. Democrat Al Gore had a slight edge among voters over age 65 in 2000—50 percent to Bush’s 47 percent.

Nevada attracts a large number of retirees with its lower taxes and dry climate, and Kerry was speaking to seniors in one of the state’s fastest growing cities.

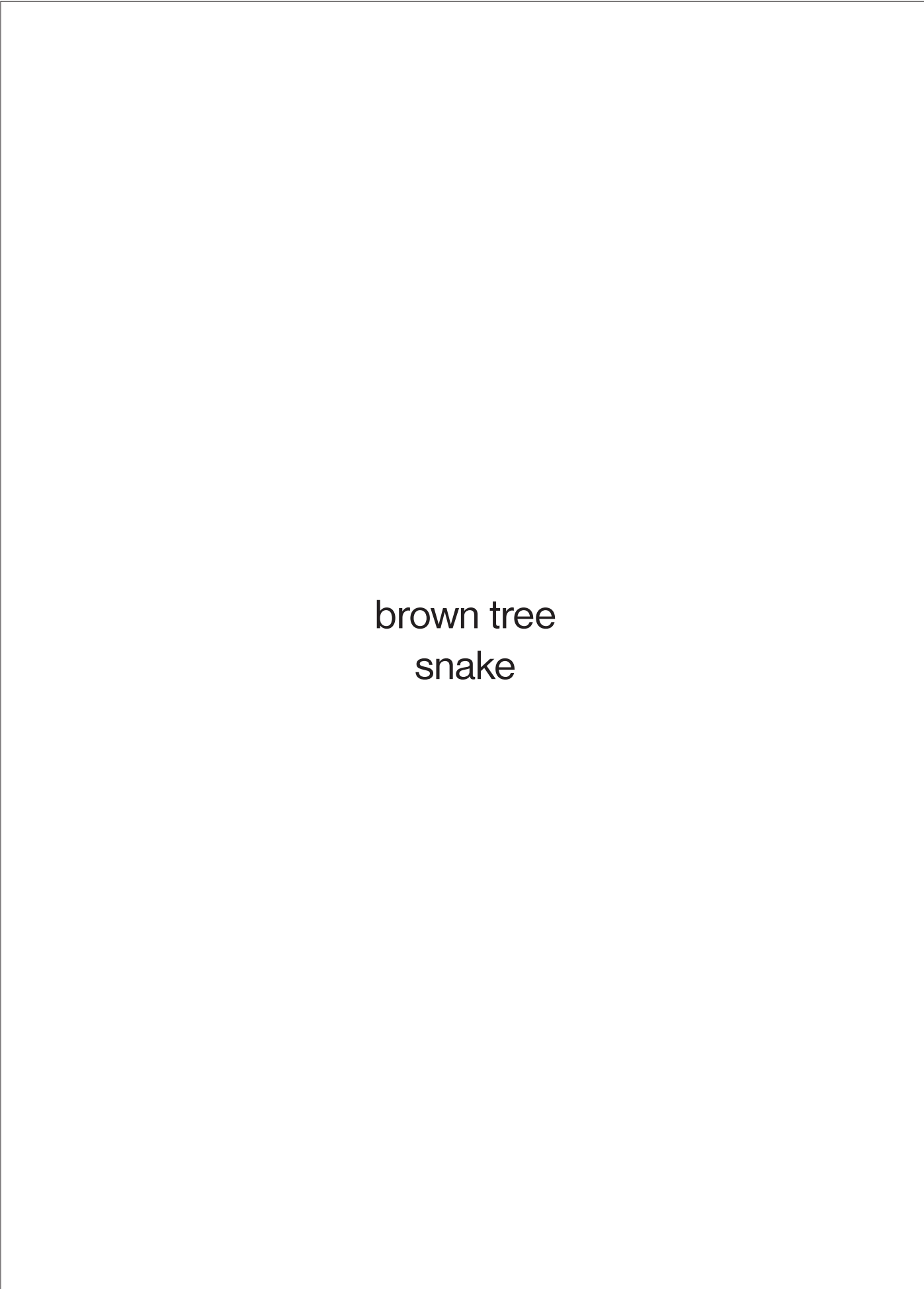
Polls show Bush and Kerry running an almost even race for the five electoral votes up for grabs in Nevada. Bush, who won the state in 2000, planned to make his third trip to Nevada Thursday. It also was Kerry’s third trip.



Kerry

shell
cmyk

ctsi



brown tree
snake

Asia

US, N. Korean discuss nuclear impasse

By EDITH M. LEDERER
AP WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—In a series of informal meetings that included an intimate dinner, senior U.S. and North Korea officials discussed how to resolve a long-standing impasse over the communist country’s nuclear weapons, the two sides and diplomatic sources said Wednesday.

The talks produced no apparent breakthrough, but both sides called them useful.

Often, these diplomatic dinners are more productive than formal meetings, though in this case it was not known whether there was any progress. The Asian diplomatic sources said the atmosphere was good.

The discussions between Li Gun, deputy head of U.S. affairs at North Korea’s Foreign Ministry, and Joseph DeTrani, the U.S. special envoy for negotiations with North Korea, took place ahead of a new round of six-party talks on the nuclear standoff expected to be held in Beijing by the end of September.

Li said it was “obvious and

natural” that he would talk to DeTrani since they were in the same room for 1 1/2 days at the conference, which began Tuesday morning.

When DeTrani was told that Li said they had talked, and was asked how the discussions went, he replied: “We had very good meetings.” He then left, refusing to answer any more questions.

The U.S. State Department said DeTrani did not schedule any bilateral meetings with participants at the Conference on Northeast Asian Security. The conference was organized by the National Committee on American Foreign Policy, a nonpartisan organization that invites scholars, diplomats, and experts to focus on key issues and conflicts involving U.S. interests.

But Li and DeTrani not only met informally during the conference, they dined together Tuesday night with South Korea’s ambassador to the United States, Han Sung-joo, and the U.S. State Department’s director of policy planning, Mitchell Reiss, the sources said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

State Department spokesman Adam Ereli said last week that

the United States would like to convene a working party meeting of the participants in the six-party talks as soon as possible to prepare for the next session.

DeTrani and Li have represented their countries at the working party meetings. Besides the United States and North Korea, the other participants in the talks are South Korea, China, Japan and Russia.

Li and Yang Xi Yu, director of the Korean peninsula office in China’s Foreign Ministry, insisted that there was no bargaining, negotiations or decisions about the six-party talks at the conference.

Asked what he saw as the next step in the six-party talks, Li said, “They have voted to have the fourth round of six-party talks and we are working on it.”

During this week’s conference, he said, “We talked about issues, but this is not negotiations, but only exchange of views.”

“The opportunity has been useful and every party has explained their original positions. We ... introduced our original positions,” Li said. “It was cordial. We exchanged (views) in a frank manner and it was businesslike.”

Japan, North Korea hold abduction talks

BEIJING (AP)—Japan and North Korea began talks Wednesday in China on a dispute over the fate of as many as 10 Japanese nationals abducted by the North decades ago.

Japanese media reports said Tokyo could suspend critical food aid to impoverished North Korea or refuse to resume talks on establishing diplomatic relations if the issue of the 10 missing is not resolved satisfactorily.

North Korea admitted in 2002 that it abducted 13 Japanese nationals during the 1970s and ‘80s to steal their identities and teach Japanese language and culture to its spies. Five of the abductees were returned to Japan in 2002.

North Korea says the other eight have died. But some in Japan believe they are alive and Tokyo is asking for a more thorough accounting. Japan also wants information on two other suspected abductees who are unaccounted for.

“We’re asking the North to make clear what happened to each and every one of the 10 Japanese still missing,” Japan’s chief delegate, Akitaka Saiki, said in comments shown on Japanese television.

Japan said this week it would send food and medicine worth \$47 million to North Korea, which relies on foreign donations to feed its people. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi’s government said it might make another donation before next March.

But Tokyo could suspend food aid to the North if it fails to provide a satisfactory response on the missing, Japan’s Kyodo News agency reported, citing an unidentified Japanese official.

The two sides have never had diplomatic relations.

Indon skydiver falls to death after record jump

BALI, Indonesia (AP)—An Indonesian skydiver jumping to celebrate a record-breaking freefall hours earlier fell to his death on the resort island of Bali after his parachute failed to open, officials said Thursday.

Theo Mandagi fell from about 14,000 feet (4,300 meters) over a field close to Bali’s international airport just before dusk Wednesday, air force Marshal Chappy Hakim said.

Earlier Wednesday, Mandagi, 54, had jumped with 102 other skydivers from around the world who briefly held on to each other to form a huge propellor shape before opening their chutes.

The jump broke the world record for most skydivers falling in formation from a single plane, Hakim said. The skydivers had been practicing since Sunday.

Hakim said the cause of the parachute failure Wednesday evening would be investigated.

Three of Mandagi’s brothers died on a skydiving trip in 1986 when their plane crashed, The Jakarta Post reported.

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Japan scrutinizes nuclear safety

By MARI YAMAGUCHI
AP WRITER

TOKYO (AP)—The Japanese government has ordered safety checks at the country's 52 nuclear plants and some 800 non-nuclear power stations to prevent the type of accident that killed four people at a reactor this week, government officials said Thursday.

Government investigators kept up searches and questioning Thursday at the plant at Mihama, 320 kilometers (200 miles) west of Tokyo, where a cooling pipe exploded on Monday. The operator, Kansai Electric Power, is under suspicion of negligence.

The Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency ordered Kansai Electric and six other Japanese utility companies on Wednesday to review inspection records of cooling pipes at nuclear power plants to check for signs of erosion, agency official Koichi Shiraga said Thursday.

The utilities were requested to submit the results by next Wednesday. The agency also ordered operators to check inspection records at their 800 non-nuclear, thermoelectric power stations.

The agency plans to send more officials to investigate Kansai Electric to collect documents related to safety records, Shiraga said.

In Mihama, the dangerously corroded pipe exploded and spewed boiling water and superheated steam on workers, killing four instantly and injuring seven others.

The two of the four victims died of suffocation when the steam burned their windpipes, and the other two apparently died from serious burns, Japa-



People enjoy swimming near the No. 3 reactor, seen at right, of the Mihama Nuclear Power Plant in Mihama Tuesday, Aug. 10, 2004.

nese media reported Thursday.

Kansai Electric acknowledged on Tuesday that the cooling pipe that caused the accident had not been thoroughly checked, despite a warning from inspectors last year that it posed a danger. Kyodo News agency reported that police planned to raid the company's offices.

On Thursday, company president Yosaku Fuji apologized to Issei Nishikawa, the governor of Fukui Prefecture, where the plant is located.

"The accident shattered the public's trust about the safety of nuclear power," Nishikawa said, accusing the company of neglecting safety measures.

In their first meeting Wednesday, members of the government's nuclear accident investigation committee blamed the lax quality and safety controls for the accident, Shiraga said.

There was no radiation leak in Mihama, but the accident rekindled concerns about the nuclear plant safety. It also raised questions about government plans to build 11 reactors by 2010.

In the most serious accident before Monday, two workers died in 1999 when they set off an uncontrolled nuclear reaction by mixing excessive amounts of uranium in buckets instead of using special mechanized tanks. Hundreds were exposed to radiation.

China releases American professor

By JOE McDONALD
AP WRITER

BEIJING (AP)—The United States is protesting China's treatment of a Chinese-born American university professor who was detained for two weeks on espionage charges, calling it harsh and inappropriate, the U.S. Embassy said Wednesday.

Fei-ling Wang's arrest was the latest in a string of such cases against academics with ties to the United States. He was arrested July 25 in Shanghai and released Aug. 8, when he returned to the United States, where he teaches at the Georgia Institute of Technology, an embassy spokeswoman said.

She said Wang was accused of stealing state secrets but she had no details of the charges, why he was later released or the status of his case.

Wang is barred from returning to China for five years, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said in a written statement. The two-sentence statement said Wang

confessed to "illegally possessing state secrets" but gave no other information.

Wang, a naturalized American citizen, told U.S. diplomats that he was held in solitary confinement for four days and deprived of sleep and water for "extended periods," the spokeswoman said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Chinese authorities failed to notify U.S. officials of the detention until Aug. 4, a violation of a consular treaty requiring notification within four days, she said.

The U.S. government plans to lodge a formal protest with China over that delay and the "harsh and inappropriate treatment" given to Wang, the spokeswoman said.

Wang an associate professor at Georgia Tech's Sam Nunn School of International Affairs in Atlanta and received his Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania, according to the Nunn School's Web site.

There is no home phone number listed for Wang in Atlanta.

He was reported missing by his wife after failing to return as planned on July 29 from a research trip to China, the U.S. Embassy spokeswoman said. She said U.S. diplomats asked Chinese officials whether they knew his whereabouts but received no reply.

The United States also plans to protest that failure to respond, the spokeswoman said.

In 2001, four Chinese-born academics who were either naturalized U.S. citizens or had U.S. residency were arrested in China on espionage charges. They were convicted and expelled from the country.

Those academics were accused of trying to obtain state secrets, but insisted they were only doing academic research.

Last month, China announced that it arrested a Chinese-born U.S. citizen, David Wei Dong, in September and planned to put him on trial soon on charges of spying on Chinese diplomatic activities in the United States for rival Taiwan.

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Science & Technology

Following spiders down technology's silk road

By MICHAEL STROH
THE BALTIMORE SUN

If you walked out of "Spider-Man 2" fantasizing about taming bullets and bad guys with a blast of spider silk, get in line: Arachnid-inspired scientists and engineers are way ahead of you.

Taking a cue from the comic-book superhero, some researchers have developed web-slinging weapons packing synthetic nets. The U.S. Coast Guard is working on a helicopter-deployed device capable of snaring criminals and terrorists on the high seas.

Others scientists are trying to unravel the molecular secrets of spider silk itself. The hope is that the silk—one of nature's strongest fibers—someday could be woven into objects ranging from impregnable body armor to wear-resistant ropes, parachutes and uniforms.

To that end, the Defense Department is bankrolling several efforts to make and spin spider silk in the laboratory.

"I think there's gonna be interest in spider silk forever," says Steven Arcidiacono, a molecular biologist with the U.S. Army Soldier Biological Chemical Command in Natick, Mass. "It's such a cool material."

Scientists were intrigued by the spider's capabilities long before Marvel Comics launched its popular character in 1962. Thinner than human hair and lighter than cotton, the strongest silk is three times tougher than Kevlar, the human-made material used in bulletproof vests, and five times stronger than steel cable.

The other thing that has drawn scientists to the material is how it's made. Unlike Kevlar, which requires intense pressure and poisonous sulfuric acid to produce, spiders can unspool silk at room

temperature, under normal pressure, using little more than proteins and water.

But efforts to produce large quantities in the lab have progressed slowly, says Frank Ko, a textile engineer at Drexel University in Philadelphia who studies the material's mechanical properties.

"Spiders," he says, "are only ahead of us by a few million years."

Scientists long ago ruled out the most obvious solution to harvesting silk: "spider farms." Unlike mulberry-munching silkworms, whose shimmering fiber is prized in the fashion world, spiders are territorial cannibals. Cage them in a pen, says Ko, and they will soon consume each other.

So scientists have turned to genetics.

In 1990, a team led by molecular biologist Randolph Lewis at the University of Wyoming decoded the first pair of spider silk genes. The genes produce "dragline" silk. The strongest of the spider's seven silks, it's used to frame webs and as a lifeline when the arachnid dangles.

The next trick is to produce the proteins made by these genes. Nexia Biotechnologies in Montreal has created a flock of genetically engineered goats designed to churn out silk proteins in their milk. After processing, the company is left with a pure powder that it markets under the name BioSteel.

But at \$1,500 a gram, the silk isn't cheap. And so the company has moved away from bullet-resistant textiles, says Nexia Chief Executive Jeffrey Turner. "We'll leave that to Spider-Man," he says. The company is looking at applications for its silk ranging from super-strong composites to cosmetics.

At the same time, Nexia and others are also working to improve the economics by inserting the silk genes in crops including alfalfa and tobacco.



Scientists are trying to unravel the molecular secrets of spider silk itself. The hope is that the silk someday could be woven into objects ranging from impregnable body armor to wear-resistant ropes, parachutes and uniforms.

But churning out cheap silk protein is only part of the challenge; scientists must then spin it.

In reality, spiders don't spin, they squeeze. Liquid silk protein is forced through fingerlike glands on a spider's abdomen called spinnerets. Spiders then stretch these filaments with their legs to align the silk protein molecules.

In 2002 researchers at Nexia and the U.S. Army announced in Science that

by mimicking this squeezing process mechanically they created a filament that was a little stretchier than the real thing and not quite as strong.

Lewis, whose research is partially funded by the Defense Department, is pushing silk research toward the next frontier: customized silks.

In a new paper published online last month in the journal Molecular Biology and Evolution, Lewis and his

team report they have decoded the gene responsible for aciniform silk, which spiders use to swath their prey.

Swathing silk is more elastic than dragline silk. By comparing the genes responsible for each of the silks, Lewis says he can pinpoint the sections of genetic code responsible for each silks' mechanical properties.

With this knowledge, he and his team are constructing synthetic genes capable of spitting out a protein for completely novel silks not produced in nature.

Still, some engineers are side-stepping the challenges of natural silk and devising applications that are only loosely spider-inspired.

Arnis Mangolds at Foster-Miller, an engineering company near Boston. Miller has spent the last 15 years or so dreaming up various web-slinging weapons, mostly for the government.

One of the first was Webshot, a flare gun-like device that fires a 15-foot-diameter nylon net to subdue fleeing suspects. Tested in the late 1990s by several U.S. police departments, the device worked but never caught on, Mangolds says.

Still, it didn't stop him from producing variations in which the nets were slathered in pine tar to make them spider-web sticky.

Now he's working on the U.S. Coast Guard project, dubbed Boat Trap, for which he and his colleagues have developed an X-shaped net designed to snare speedboats and other watercraft.

Packed inside an explosive-lined drum and dropped from a Coast Guard helicopter, it's designed to deploy just above the waves and gum up a boat's propeller shaft.

"People are still trying to figure out what you can do with nets," Mangolds says. "It's kind of in its infancy right now."

Dutch firm launches music download site

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP)—In a bid to compete with Apple's iTunes digital music downloading service in Europe, a Dutch record company has launched a web site offering 250,000 tracks from five major record labels.

Free Record Shop Holding NV, which sells music, films and games at stores around northwest Europe, debuted its Dutch and French-language Web sites Tuesday.

The sites received more than 500,000 Internet visitors in the first 24 hours, beating previous weekly records for all the company's sites together, said Olaf Zwijnenburg, who is overseeing the introduction.

The service competes with popular licensed music download services such as iTunes which do not have the legal rights to sell the selection being offered by the Free Record Shop in the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg.

"We differ from Apple's iTunes

in that we offer both physical (compact discs) and digital music. We also have a selection of local artists which Apple doesn't have and that gives us a unique market position," he said.

Unlike Apple Computer Inc.'s iTunes store, which uses the AAC format, Free Record employs Microsoft Corp.'s WMA format.

Visitors to the Free Record sites can purchase downloads for prices ranging from \$1.09 for a single song to \$26.80 for a popular new double album.

The service was delayed by more than four years of negotiations with five major record labels—Sony, EMI, Universal, BMG and Warner which own the rights to music the company is selling. The bulk of the profits from the online sales will go to them, Zwijnenburg said.

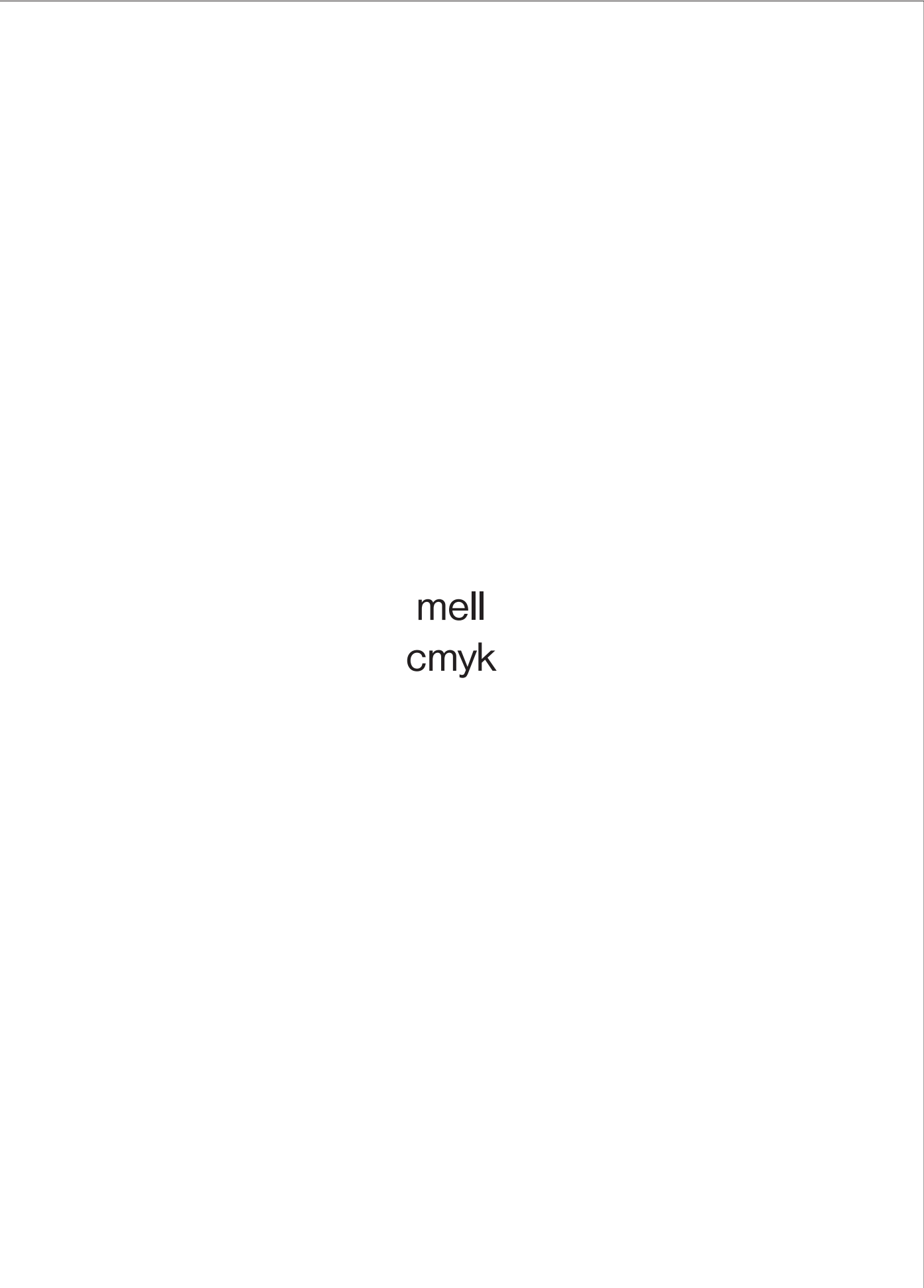
Most of the tracks initially offered on the sites are hit singles and albums, but the selection will later be expanded to include independent record labels, Free Record Shop said.

labor

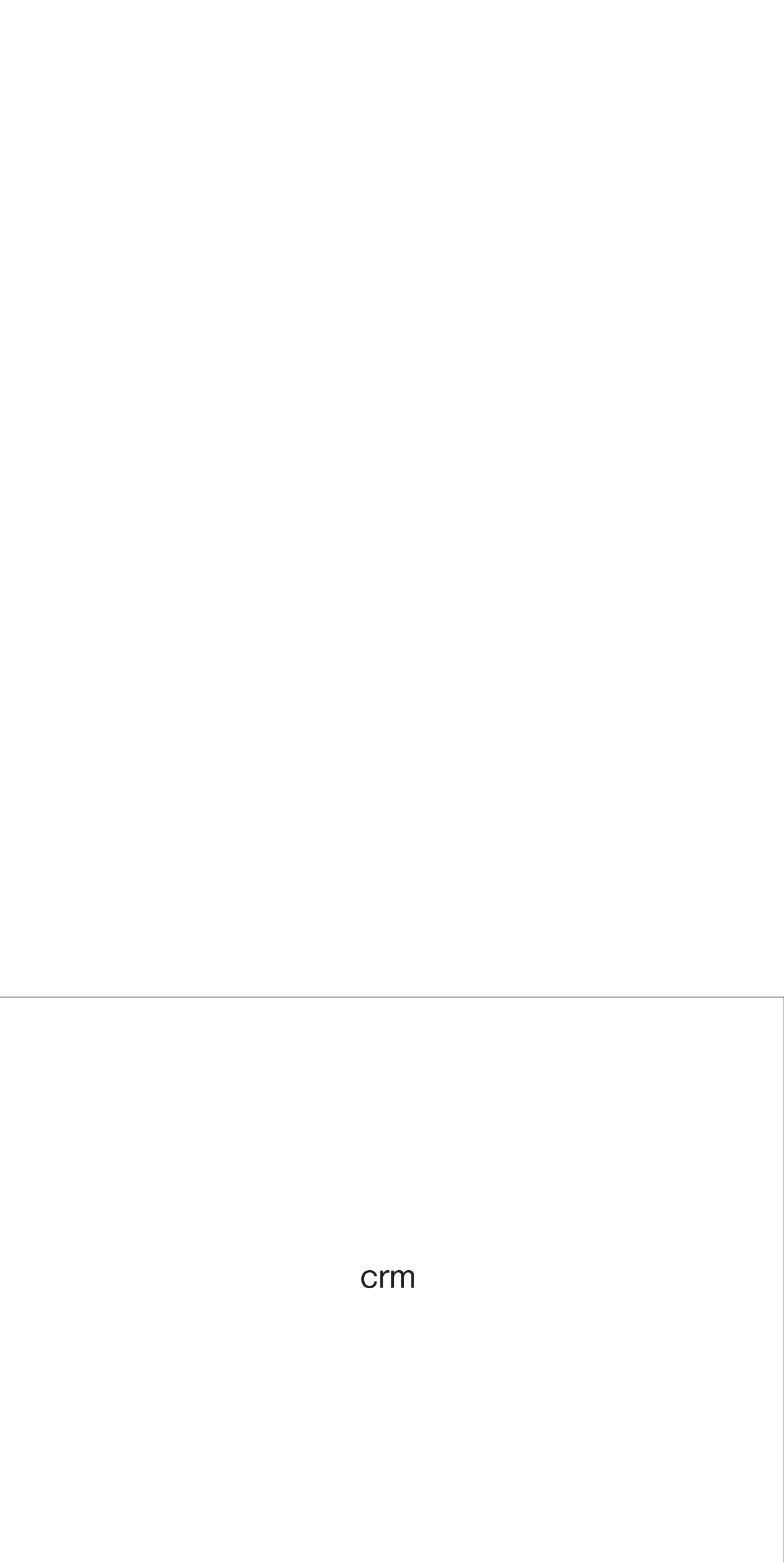
labor

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Life & Style







Vivica A. Fox brags about turning 40

By JANICE RHOSHALLE LITTLEJOHN
FOR THE AP

LOS ANGELES (AP)—It's not every day you'll hear a Hollywood actress bragging about turning 40 the way Vivica A. Fox is doing.

Of course she can boast about aging because she doesn't show it, not even on this day, when she had taken a red-eye flight from Toronto and spent much of the morning promoting her new Lifetime series "Missing."

She's bright-eyed, smiling and talking a mile-a-minute about everything from the single life and the "little young fellas" who keep "checkin'" her out to going shopping for frilly, pretty things—like the strapless, pink A-line and matching feathery flip flops she's wearing.

"Guurl, I'm excited about 40. I ain't wet behind the ears no more!" she says, laughing. "I'm a woman and I'm cool with me, and if everybody don't like me, that's OK because I ain't goin' to like everybody anyway, and I'm cool with that, too."

Yet it appears television audiences like Fox just fine in the newly retooled "Missing," which premiered last season as "1-800-MISSING" with Caterina Scorsone and Gloria Rueben, who has left the show.

Since last month's season debut, "Missing" has climbed to No. 1 in its time period (10 p.m. EDT Saturdays) with women aged 18 to 49, according to Lifetime, which just ordered five additional episodes of the series.

After a string of ill-fated shows, Fox now has a chance for a more lucrative series run playing FBI special agent Nicole Scott, a frank, off-the-cuff investigator partnered with straight-arrow agent and psychic Jess Mastriani (Scorsone).

Making "Missing" is like "doing a mini-movie every week," Fox says. "I'm doing drama, with a little bit of humor added, and I'm very happy. I like being here."

Series creator Debra Martin Chase seems just as pleased with the casting.

"Vivica's that great combination: She looks amazing, she's smart; women love her, men love her," Chase said. "We were able to take advantage of that and create a character that is vulnerable, who is gentle but tough and is not afraid to kick some butt; who breaks the rules but who has her own code of honor."

Having finished "Kill Bill: Vol. 1 & 2," "Ella Enchanted," and a series of urban romantic comedies, the woman who cata-

pulted her movie career with an out-of-this world kiss with Will Smith in "Independence Day" wasn't interested in returning to television.

But Lifetime had other ideas.

"Vivica's was the first name we went to when Gloria talked about wanting to leave," says Lifetime programming vice president Kelly Goode, "and Debra was just dogged about going after her."

After three months of relentless pursuit, Fox finally got an offer she couldn't refuse: co-executive producing credits on "Missing" and a film production deal with Lions Gate Entertainment, which produces the series in Toronto.

"I feel like I've achieved another level in a business that's not kind to African American actresses," says Fox.

But juggling her roles as producer and star hasn't been easy.

"There's days when I gotta get down on my knees and do positive prayers, especially when I first started the show," she says. "There were always so many questions and ways I'm being split that I have to stay positive to keep my strength, to keep my serenity."

She's needed that a lot lately, after her divorce to singer Sixx-Nine (Christopher Harvest) in 2002 and the abrupt end of her romance with rapper 50 Cent, who began insinuating after the breakup that Fox was "crazy" and using him to get her face on magazine covers.

Fox waited until the BET Awards in May before publicly responding to 50 Cent's comments.

"I spoke out because I needed closure," she said. "I needed to remind everybody, I've been doing this for a long time. I'm not new to the game, I'm true to the game."

Mulling it over now, she says "the mistake that me and 50 made was that we went public too fast. We just got too excited about each other. It was just exciting!"

She added: "I didn't speak about the break-up when it happened, and he was going so public, which was completely disappointing ... I really don't know what I did that made us break up. It was sad, because I really cared for him, but I still wish him well. But I will never publicly put down a black man. I just can't."

Moving ahead, Fox will

soon be back on the big screen with Eddie Griffin in the action thriller "Blast," and is awaiting distribution on several projects, including one of four "Beauty Shop" features.

In the meantime, she's looking to finance her "passion project," "Vertical," an independent film that she will produce and star in.

"It's kind of like Vivica's 'Training Day,'" she explains. "I play a very dark character that's very charming, which is fun."

Taking a moment, she sighs and smiles. "You know, I just feel at peace with Vivica right now," she says. "A new chapter is getting ready to happen in my life. I'm just thankful and not taking anything for granted and enjoying my life."



Fox

wallace

NYC mayor to probe arrest of Mike Wallace

NEW YORK (AP)—Eighty-six-year-old CBS newsmen Mike Wallace—arrested and cuffed after a confrontation with taxi and limousine inspectors—wonders why anyone thought he was such a threat. So does Mayor Mike Bloomberg.

"Why a man in his 80s was so threatening that they had to arrest him when they normally don't arrest anybody certainly gives you cause to ask the question," Bloomberg said at his daily press briefing Wednesday.

"Why he'd have to be handcuffed and led away, or whatever happened, I don't know, but you can rest assured we will be looking into it."

The dispute began as the "60 Minutes" correspondent was leaving Luke's Restaurant late Tuesday after picking up a take-out order of meatloaf, Wallace said on WFAN's "Imus in the Morning."

Wallace saw two Taxi and Limousine Commission inspectors interviewing his driver, who they said was double-parked. "I asked what's going on, and they kept telling me to get back in the car," he recalled. "Then they arrested me and took me to the 19th precinct."

Wallace was released after being issued a summons citing

him with disorderly conduct. He's due in court in October.

On Wednesday, Wallace told Entertainment Tonight: "I sat there for an hour or so and they (the police) said, 'OK, we know who you are, we know what you do, we have no problems with you.'"

"I would call this a comedy of errors, but there was no comedy," he said. "So I went home, put the meatloaf in the microwave and it was superb."

The inspectors saw it another way, saying Wallace approached them and became "overly as-

sertive and disrespectful," interfering with their ability to perform their duties.

The inspectors said they asked Wallace to step away from the car, but he refused, and lunged at one of them, TLC spokesman Allan Fromberg told The New York Post.

"I'm an 86-year-old man," Wallace told the Post. "For whatever reason, this guy and his buddy were intent upon telling me that I was interfering with the execution of the law."

Fromberg told The Associated Press on Wednesday the agency was investigating the incident but would not comment further.



Wallace

Winning gambler is peeved when her date wants half

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: If a gentleman asks a lady to accompany him to a casino and gives her money to gamble, is it proper for him to insist that she split her winnings with him? This happened to me recently.

Even before the \$1,000 credits were finished rolling, my date called out that it was a 50/50 split. Most of my friends felt it was highly inappropriate, and that I should have been entitled to my entire jackpot.

I would have preferred being given the chance to make up my own mind about whether I wished to share my winnings. My friends also pointed out that this man makes four times the money I do and should have been more generous.

Do you think my friends were right? At first I was just a little bit irritated. Now I feel taken advantage of.

SHORTCHANGED IN SACRAMENTO

DEAR SHORTCHANGED: Considering the fact that your date advanced the money that brought your windfall, I'd say you are 100 percent ahead of where you would be had he not been so generous. You may feel offended at his sense of entitlement, but a lady would have offered to share.

□ □ □ □ □

DEAR ABBY: I am a 33-year-old woman who has never been married. My boyfriend, "Mickey," recently proposed and I accepted. We're planning a small wedding in about four months. It's a first marriage for both of us.

I have two small dogs whom I adore. Their names are Melody and Harmony. Mickey insists that I get rid of one of them and that I am immature for wanting to keep both.

I explained that Melody and Harmony were around before he was, and I can't give up either one. He knew about them before we began dating.

They are not outdoor pets. I keep them very clean and do not see what the problem is. Melody and Harmony both have been through basic dog training and are well-behaved.

I am disturbed that, knowing how much I care for them, he would ask such a thing. We seem unable to reach an agreement about this. I love Mickey dearly and know he loves me, too. How can we resolve this?

BROKENHEARTED IN PEORIA, ARIZ.

DEAR BROKENHEARTED: What your fiance is suggesting is a very poor start for a marriage. If you cave in to these demands, you will never forgive yourself—and it will only be the beginning of what he will want you to sacrifice. My advice to you is to postpone the wedding until your fiance can find enough love in his heart for the three of you, because you are a package deal.

□ □ □ □ □

DEAR ABBY: Please tell people that when shaking hands, not to "squeeze" a person's hand hard. I have arthritis in my hands and it hurts so bad when some people shake my hand. Just a gentle shake is sufficient. Please print this.

SORE HAND IN PILGRIM, KY.

DEAR SORE: A person can shake your hand only if you extend it. The next time you're in a social situation and someone extends his or her hand—smile, reach out and touch the person on the upper arm and say, "I'd shake your hand, but I can't because I have arthritis."

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Good advice for everyone—teens to seniors—is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)



Dear Abby

Andre 3000 is world's best-dressed man

NEW YORK (AP)—Andre 3000 is the world's best-dressed man, according to Esquire magazine.

"He's a complete individual," Nick Sullivan, Esquire's fashion director, said Tuesday. "But that's really the point."

Andre 3000 is the usually over-the-top dressed half of hip-hop duo OutKast. Some of the 30-year-old's fashion outings include: a lime green jacket at the 2004 Grammy Awards, candy apple red fur for the VH1 Big in 2003 ceremony and a pink-on-pink ensemble for the 2003 MTV Video Music Awards.

"He's probably worn his most outrageous when he's in a video or on stage," said Sullivan, who said Esquire's list is more about personal style than a celebrity's stylist's style. "What we photographed him in is very much what he wanted to wear."

Andre 3000 sports several different and subtle looks in the magazine's spread including a double-breasted suede trench coat by Michael Kors, a cashmere sweater by the Ralph Lauren Purple Label and corduroy trousers by AndreBenjamin, the rapper's own clothing line.



Sources of his fashion inspiration include clothes from period flicks such as "Legends of the Fall" and "The Great Gatsby" and the "old men" in his neighborhood.

"They're kind of like a uniform, which I've always been into," he says in the September issue of Esquire. "To me, that's real style, anything that feels comfortable and expresses your personality and makes you stand a little taller."

Although the magazine has compiled best-dressed lists in the past, this year's list is the first worldwide affair. Other best-dressed men include "Today" co-anchor Matt Lauer, Prince Felipe of Spain, Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai and San Francisco mayor Gavin Newsom.

The list was compiled through a set of criteria by a panel of fashion experts and Esquire editors.

Andre 3000, lead singer of the musical group OutKast, walks through the floor during the Democratic National Convention at the FleetCenter in Boston in this July 26, 2004 file photo.

AP

Sizemore arrested on probation violation

WEST HOLLYWOOD, Calif. (AP)—Actor Tom Sizemore was arrested Wednesday on a probation violation and released after posting \$10,000 bail, authorities said.

Sizemore, 42, was arrested for a narcotics violation when probation officers conducting random visits discovered drugs at his residence, said Los Angeles County sheriff's Sgt. Vance Duffy.

Sizemore, who has appeared in such films as "Black Hawk

Down" and "Saving Private Ryan," was sentenced in October to six months in jail on misdemeanor charges of harassing, annoying and physically abusing former Hollywood madam Heidi Fleiss during their two-year relationship.

Superior Court Judge Antonio Barreto Jr. stayed the jail time while Sizemore

took part in a rehabilitation program for drug abusers, and the judge said he would consider reducing the sentence to 90 days if the actor successfully completed the program and other requirements.

Sizemore's attorney, Michael Rovell, did not immediately return a call left after business hours Wednesday.



Sizemore

Photographer sues Aguilera, bodyguard

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Christina Aguilera and a bodyguard were sued by a photographer who says the guard punched and spat on him after he took the singer's picture outside a Hollywood nightclub last year.

According to the lawsuit filed Tuesday in Superior Court, David Keeler was attacked after he photographed Aguilera leaving the club at about 2 a.m. on May 21, 2003. After Aguilera and Vernon Warren got into a car, Keller said Warren told him he "needed to learn respect" and punched and spat on him.



Aguilera

"Christina has no reason to believe that such an incident

did occur, nor did she witness such an incident," Aguilera's representative, Meghan Prophet, said in a phone interview Wednesday.

The suit also names Anthony Davis, owner of A.D. Entertainment, and Three Wishes Tour Inc., saying they hired Warren as a bodyguard.

Davis said he had not seen the suit and declined comment. A representative of Three Wishes Tour Inc. could not be located for comment.

The suit seeks unspecified damages.

Kinks guitarist recovering from stroke

LONDON (AP)—Dave Davies, one of the founding members of British rock group The Kinks, has been partially paralyzed by a stroke he suffered in June, his spokesman said.

Spokesman Alan Robinson said Davies, 57, would have to spend at least another month in hospital, but that doctors were confident that with physiotherapy he would recover.

"He is paralyzed on the

right hand side of his body but he retains some feeling and he can still hold a guitar plectrum," Robinson said Monday. "These small things mean a hell of a lot. They're small but very important."

Davies, who founded The Kinks in the early 1960s with his brother Ray, collapsed June 30 while promoting his new solo album, "Bug."

One of the best of the gui-

tar-driven bands of the 1960s "British Invasion," The Kinks had a string of hits including "You Really Got Me," "All Day and All of the Night," "Dedicated Follower of Fashion" and "Lola."

Ray Davies, 59, the band's chief singer and songwriter, was shot in the leg in by a thief who snatched his girlfriend's bag as the pair walked in New Orleans on Jan. 4.

Jane Fonda urges women to vote

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP)—Actress Jane Fonda is urging women to vote this fall. The two-time Academy Award winner says 40 million eligible female voters did not cast ballots in the 2000 general election, a trend she hopes to reverse come Nov. 2.

"Women's vision can be the ruling paradigm if women make themselves heard," Fonda said Tuesday at a news conference.

Fonda, who lives part-time in northern New Mexico, appeared at the news conference with New Mexico Secretary of State Rebecca Vigil-Giron; LaDonna Harris, president of Americans for Indian Opportunity; and Maria Jose Rodriguez Cadiz, a court monitors supervisor for the Santa Fe Rape Crisis Center.

Vigil-Giron, a Democrat, said women are more likely to vote than men but that there needs to be more female political candidates.

"We need to make sure that our voice is heard," she said.

John Dendahl, former chairman of the state Republican Party, denounced the get-out-the-vote effort as "totally partisan." He said Fonda has a long history of liberal activism and that Vigil-Giron recorded phone messages in the 2000 general election calling on Democrats to vote and urging women to vote for Democrats.

Pastimes



Mickelson can halve majors with PGA win

By PETE HERRERA
AP SPORTS WRITER

HAVEN, Wis. (AP)—Phil Mickelson is confident that someone will again dominate the majors the way Jack Nicklaus did 30 years ago and Tiger Woods has more recently.

Mickelson need only look in the mirror to spot one of the candidates.

If not for a three-putt from 5 feet on the 71st hole in the U.S. Open and a missed 4-footer on the back nine in the final round at Royal Troon last month, Mickelson might be teeing it up Thursday in the PGA Championship with a chance to grab the final leg of the Grand Slam.

"I'm three shots away from having the Grand Slam," he said. "Certainly, I think about that. I don't dwell on it."

Whistling Straits is enough to grab all his attention.

The PGA Championship gets under way Thursday on the longest (7,514 yards) and newest (6 years old) course in the modern era ever used for a major championship, and it is somewhat of a mystery.

No one knows what to expect on a course that is intimidating at first sight, and never gets easy. Players might get a better idea in the first round, although Mickelson played in the afternoon and had to wait his turn.

Given his career - 0-for-42 as a professional in the majors until the Masters - Mickelson doesn't mind waiting.

The lefty who once was the best golfer never to win a major now seems to do everything right in the majors.

It all started with that 18-foot putt that curled into the side of the cup on the 18th green at Augusta in April. He followed up the Masters win with a



Phil Mickelson gives thumbs up after leaving the ninth green during practice for the PGA Championship at Whistling Straits in Haven, Wis., on Tuesday, Aug. 10, 2004.

runner-up finish to Retief Goosen in the U.S. Open and third place in the British Open, where he had never finished in the top 10.

"I think it would have been quite a bit tougher, absolutely, having those close chances, having the lead in the final nine and not winning ... had I not won the Masters," Mickelson said.

His 1-2-3 finishes in the majors has sent his stock and confidence soaring. He also won the Bob Hope Chrysler Classic and is second on the money list with more than \$5 million.

"I'm certainly more confident in my preparation for the majors now that I seem to have found a process that has been effective," he said.

He was asked this week if he thought there would ever be another dominant player in the majors.

"I certainly I would not rule it out," he said. "In fact, I would expect it to happen again."

Mickelson's game plan includes spending hours plotting how to play certain holes, which ones to lay up on, which ones to attack.

He's also embraced the idea that length isn't everything. A controlled fade off the tee has helped him hit more fairways and he no longer reaches for the driver on every hole.

But he might not have a choice this week.

Whistling Straits promises to test the will and wisdom of the best players in the world. The finishing hole, a par 4 at 500 yards, could be a three-shot hole if the wind is strong and into the players.

"Certainly, 18 is not a par 4, so you can't get hung up on, 'I have to make

four there every day or I won't win the tournament,'" Davis Love III said.

Also part of the mix are hundreds of bunkers, massive undulating greens, narrow winding fairways, fescue-filled rough and, above all, the treacherous winds blowing off Lake Michigan.

Wind and intermittent rain hit the course Wednesday, but things were expected to improve through the remainder of the week, with highs in the 70s and 80s by the weekend.

What's more, no one has ever played a competitive round at the links-style course, so no one is sure what to expect.

"I think it adds certainly to the suspense," Love said. "It might be good for the experienced players because they say, hey, we don't know what's going to happen, so we are just going to go play and not have any target score or expectations in our head."

This is the final major of the season, aptly named "Glory's Last Shot."

It's also Tiger Woods' last chance to snap his slump in majors - he's winless in the last nine - and protect his No. 1 ranking. Another also-ran finish in a major - his best finish this year was a tie for ninth in the British Open - also could end Woods' streak of five straight player of the year titles.

Vijay Singh is looking for his fifth win of the season, but he is 0-for-18 in the majors since winning the 2000 Masters.

Then there's Ernie Els. He's made more than \$4 million this year, but has been twice a bridesmaid in the majors. He finished second to Mickelson in the Masters and lost the British Open in a playoff to Todd Hamilton.

A win here would likely push the Big Easy past Tiger in the world rankings.

Warner to start Giants preseason opener



ALBANY, N.Y. (AP)—Kurt Warner will start ahead of Eli Manning in the New York Giants exhibition opener.

Coach Tom Coughlin made that announcement Wednesday, but added that the competition for the starting job between the two-time MVP and the No. 1 pick in last April's draft remains tight.

"Are they even? I would say 'Yes,'" Coughlin said is designating Warner to start Friday night against Kansas City at Giants Stadium. "Whoever has the opportunity to play with the starters, that's who usually has his better practices. From that standpoint, they are. Now we will see how they separate out."

Warner will play into the second quarter, with Manning running the offense until at least the middle of the third quarter. Jesse Palmer will finish.

"I've been a backup before so it won't be hard," said Manning, who signed a six-year, \$45 million contract last month. "Kurt's already played a bunch of games, and he knows what it's like. It's my job to watch and learn from him and just try to get a feel of the game."

The last time Manning didn't start was at Mississippi as a red-shirt freshman in 2001. He played six games as a reserve.

Getting the starting nod didn't

surprise Warner, the former St. Louis Ram signed by the Giants in June to give them a veteran to run the team until Manning was ready.

"Just the way things played out in practice, I don't want to say I assumed that, but it looked like it was leaning in that direction, at least for this first game," Warner said.

Coughlin plans to keep some of his starters on the field when Manning takes over. The coach declined to say whether Manning would be given a chance to start next week in the exhibition at Carolina.

"I'm not talking about the second preseason game. We'll look at one game and see where we are," Coughlin said.

Manning, the brother of Indianapolis Colts quarterback Peyton Manning and the son of former New Orleans Saint Archie Manning, understands he will be under a microscope.

"Everybody always has their eyes on the quarterback and new draft picks, so it will be a matter of me going in there. People will be watching, I just have to play my game," Manning said.

Running back Tiki Barber thinks Manning won't be bothered by the lofty expectations.

"I think he has his own ideas of what he wants to be at this point," Barber said. "That's all that is important."

Bryant prosecutors seek indefinite delay

DENVER (AP)—Prosecutors have asked the judge in Kobe Bryant's sexual assault case to put the trial on hold indefinitely, saying courthouse gaffes have crippled the chances of seating an unbiased jury and suggesting the accuser is not ready to testify against the NBA star.

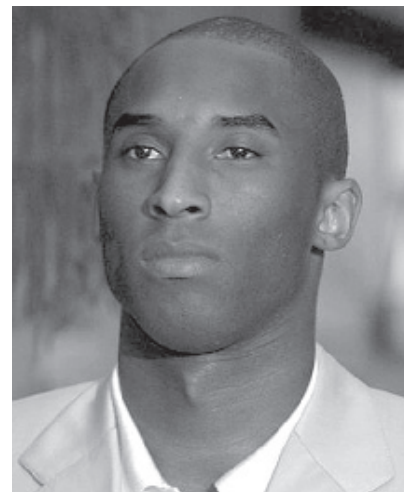
After the request was made public Wednesday, prosecutors appealed a key ruling in the case to the Colorado Supreme Court. The appeal, if accepted, could lead to a weeklong delay even if the trial judge denies the request for an indefinite postponement.

Most of the appeal - arguing that the accuser's sexual activities should not be admitted as evidence—was filed under seal. Prosecution spokeswoman Krista Flannigan declined to comment Wednesday.

Legal experts say the request for a delay could be the first step toward dropping the case altogether now that the accuser has sued Bryant in civil court for monetary damages. They said the civil case will hurt prosecutors because the defense can argue that the 20-year-old woman is simply after Bryant's money.

"If prosecutors are looking for a face-saving way out, this is it," legal analyst Andrew Cohen said.

Jury selection in the criminal case is scheduled to begin Aug. 27, little more than two weeks away. It was not known when the judge might rule on the request.



Bryant

In a court filing made public Wednesday, prosecutor Dana Easter said the recent release of closed-door testimony hurt the chances of getting a fair jury. She also said the judge has not yet decided whether the woman's mental health and medical history will be admitted as evidence, leaving prosecutors in limbo on whether to hire more expert witnesses. Easter also accused defense experts of waiting too long to turn over DNA test results.

Easter singled out transcripts from a June hearing that were mistakenly e-mailed to seven news organizations, including The Associated Press. The media outlets won a court fight with the judge to publish the details, including a defense expert's explanation on why she believes the accuser had sex with

someone after her encounter with Bryant and before she was examined at a hospital—a claim the woman's attorney has denied.

The widely publicized allegation was "extremely harmful" to the prosecution's case, Easter said, and District Judge Terry Ruckriegle's strict gag order has prevented prosecutors from responding.

"The release of this information 28 days prior to trial will have the effect of tainting the jury pool and impact the ability of the prosecution to obtain a fair jury at this time," Easter wrote.

Prosecutors filed their request for a delay on Tuesday, the same day attorneys for the accuser filed the civil lawsuit against Bryant in federal court in Denver seeking compensatory damages of at least \$75,000 and unspecified punitive damages.

Attorneys for the accuser and Bryant did not return messages. Flannigan declined to elaborate on the filing, but said a trial was still planned.

"We are still moving forward; nothing has changed," she said.

Prosecutors' appeal to the state Supreme Court challenges Ruckriegle's decision to allow details from the accuser's sex life in the three days before her hospital exam to be introduced as evidence. That decision is expected to allow the defense to argue she had sex with someone after Bryant but before the exam. The woman's attorney has denied that claim.

Woods aims to regain form at British Open

By **TIM DAHLBERG**
AP SPORTS COLUMNIST

TROON, Scotland (AP)—Tiger Woods has been hitting fairways this week, and his caddie, Steve Williams, hasn't been hitting anyone.

The British Open doesn't start until Thursday, of course, and things can change just as quickly as the quirky weather off the coast of west Scotland. Woods doesn't need to be reminded of that.

The last time the British Open was held in Scotland, he was not only an overwhelming favorite, but British bookies also fancied him to finish off the Grand Slam that year.

Incredibly, just two years later, he's not even the pick to win this week at Royal Troon. That honor would go to Ernie Els, who just a short time ago seemed baffled by the idea he could actually beat Woods when it really mattered.

Now, it seems, anyone—and that really means anyone—can beat Woods. Eight players have won major championships since he took the U.S. Open at Bethpage, N.Y., in 2002.

With each wayward drive, Woods sinks a little bit more toward mediocrity. The mystique is gone, and so is the intimidation other players used to feel every time he stuck a tee in the ground.

"Pure and simple, he can't drive the ball in the fairway," Nick Price said. "From all I've seen now the last five months, his off-the-tee game is so erratic, and there's no pattern to it because he's losing it right and left. Until such time as he starts getting the ball in the fairway, he's going to struggle."

"You have to be a great driver of the ball to win major championships."

Indeed you do, and Woods once was. Which, of course, brings us to the question of what Woods has been doing to become that great driver again.

Well, he's got a new driver for one, a big fat graphite shafted Nike that's just the type he once



Tiger Woods is seen during practice for the British Open at Royal Troon golf course in Troon, Scotland Wednesday July 14, 2004. The British Open is scheduled to start on Thursday July 15.

AP

scorned. He's longer than ever, but length has never been a problem for Woods.

Presumably he's been out practicing with it, though you might wonder where he's getting the time. He's got a fiancée and an increasing number of business interests and recreational pursuits away from golf.

Some of those are in Las Vegas, where Butch Harmon, his former swing guru, teaches. Woods' visits, though, have nothing to do with getting instruction from his estranged coach.

Last month he jetted there for a few days of gambling after finishing well off the pace at the U.S. Open. And just hours after he finished his final round at the Western Open near Chicago, he was spotted partying at a posh casino nightclub.

Coincidence? Maybe. Woods, like anyone else, has the right to blow off steam. He's certainly earned it after bearing the many responsibilities that came with being Tiger Woods over the last few years.

But Woods became great because of his singular focus on his golf game, as his father, Earl Woods, would be more than willing

to tell you. He became great by constant hours of practicing to come up with a short game as great as the shots he could seemingly manufacture at will off the tee.

Whether the same focus is still there is hard to figure out. Woods doesn't let anyone inside his private life, and he's not about to tell anyone what he's doing.

But if last month's U.S. Open is any indication, there are cracks in the armor. At Shinnecock Hills, Woods feuded publicly with Harmon even while his drives were going sideways, and he wasn't a factor on the weekend.

At the same time, his caddie became so annoyed at a photographer that he kicked his camera, then later went into the crowd and grabbed another one from an astonished spectator.

The boss doesn't like distractions, you know.

"I've always played my best when I've gone out and played—and stayed—focused on what I have to do and not worry about anything else," Woods said Tuesday.

Woods didn't say much else. He's become more taciturn than ever, insisting as always that everything is fine, while at the

same time refusing to be drawn into any specifics about his game or his swing.

Harmon speculated at the U.S. Open that his former student was in a "bit of denial" about everything, a statement that angered Woods mostly because it was made publicly.

Since then, Woods and Harmon have chatted and Woods said they patched up some of their differences. None of that chat concerned his golf swing, though, and Woods still stubbornly clings to the notion he can fix things himself.

Maybe he can. Maybe Woods knows something no one else knows and will find a way to do something he hasn't done since last October—win a stroke-play tournament.

Winning, of course, is the best way to quiet critics. If Woods can win his second British Open, people will quickly quit talking about his slump and return to talking about his chances of beating Jack Nicklaus' record of 18 major championship titles.

And maybe his caddie will get a clue and quit bullying people on his way around the course.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

SPORTS TRANSACTIONS

MLB

HOUSTON ASTROS-Fired Jimmy Williams, manager; Burt Hooton, pitching coach; and Harry Spilman, hitting coach. Named Phil Garner manager, Jim Hickey pitching coach, and Gary Gaetti hitting coach.

NBA

ATLANTA HAWKS-Signed C Jason Collier.
BOSTON CELTICS-Re-signed C Mark Blount to a six-year contract.
CHARLOTTE BOBCATS-Signed G Jason Hart and F Tamar Slay.
DALLAS MAVERICKS-Re-signed G Marquis Daniels to a five-year contract with a team option.
DETROIT PISTONS-Signed F Antonio McDyess to a four-year contract with a team option and G-F Carlos Delfino to a three-year contract with a team option.
GOLDEN STATE WARRIORS-Re-signed C Adonal Foyle to a six-year contract.
LOS ANGELES CLIPPERS-Traded F-C Melvin Ely and G Eddie House to Charlotte for 2005 and 2006 second-round draft picks.
LOS ANGELES LAKERS-Traded C Shaquille O'Neal to Miami for F Lamar Odom, F Caron Butler, F-C Brian Grant and a future first-round draft pick.
MEMPHIS GRIZZLIES-Signed F Brian Cardinal to a six-year contract.
MILWAUKEE BUCKS-Signed C Etan Thomas to a six-year offer sheet.
PHILADELPHIA 76ERS-Signed F Brian Skinner to a multiyear contract.
PHOENIX SUNS-Signed G Quentin Richardson to a six-year offer sheet. Signed G Steve Nash to a six-year contract.
SAN ANTONIO SPURS-Re-signed F Bruce Bowen. Signed G Beno Udrih.
TORONTO RAPTORS-Signed G Rafer Alston to a five-year contract.
UTAH JAZZ-Signed F Carlos Boozer and C Mehmet Okur to six-year offer sheets. Re-signed G Carlos Arroyo to a four-year contract.

NFL

GREEN BAY PACKERS-Voided the trade of DE Jamal Reynolds to Indianapolis after Reynolds failed his physical and waived him.
NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS-Released S Jason Perry.

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES-Signed G Adrien Clarke to a four-year contract and LB Jeremiah Trotter to a one-year contract.

Olympics

U.S. OLYMPIC MEN'S ROAD CYCLING TEAM-Announced Levi Leipheimer will replace Lance Armstrong.

College

AUBURN-Named Casey Dunn assistant baseball coach.
DARTMOUTH-Named Maribel Sanchez Souther women's cross country coach.
EVERGREEN STATE-Named Kim Farnsworth athletic trainer.
HOUSTON-Named John Severance women's tennis coach.
N.J. CITY-Named Bridgette Quimpo softball coach.
NORTH DAKOTA STATE-Named Eric Viney women's assistant volleyball coach.
NORTHWESTERN-Announced men's junior basketball F Bernard Cote will transfer from Kentucky.
OKLAHOMA-Named Bill Pink director of women's basketball operations.
PALM BEACH ATLANTIC-Announced the resignation of Chris Bizol, men's and women's tennis coach, to take a position with Texas-Tyler.
RHODE ISLAND-Announced the resignation of Boe Pearman, women's basketball coach.
SANTA CLARA-Named M. Felipe Montoro assistant cross country coach and Steve Drake women's assistant basketball coach.
SETON HALL-Named Gerson Echeverry men's assistant soccer coach.
SKIDMORE-Named Darren Bennett women's basketball coach.
ST. FRANCIS, PA.-Named Wylie Crisanti women's lacrosse coach.
TULSA-Named Christy Connoyer softball coach.
WRIGHT STATE-Named Rob Cooper baseball coach.

By The Associated Press

LOCAL SCORES

RESTAURANT LEAGUE STANDINGS

Angel Wings	3	0
Country House	3	1
Jollibee	3	1
Capricciosa	2	1
Keeraku	1	2
LSG Sky Chefs	0	3
El Segundo	0	4

Armstrong, UConn pair win ESPY Awards

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Tour de France champion Lance Armstrong was a repeat winner as male athlete of the year, and Connecticut basketball stars Diana Taurasi and Emeka Okafor were also honored Wednesday night at the 12th annual ESPY Awards.

Armstrong is currently attempting to win the Tour de France for the sixth straight time.

Taurasi won the best college female athlete for the second straight year as well as the best female athlete, while Okafor was chosen the best male college athlete. The two led their respective teams to NCAA championships last spring.

For the first time, fans determined the winners in all 36 categories, including the

19 cross-cutter honors that pit athletes from different sports against each other. More than 10 1/2 million votes were cast between June 21 and July 9.

Armstrong was honored as the best male athlete over home run king Barry Bonds, quarterbacks Tom Brady and Peyton Manning, and NBA star Kevin Garnett.

Taurasi was selected over golfer Annika Sorenstam and tennis star Justine Henin-Hardenne in the female athlete of the year category.

The Detroit Pistons, who beat the Los Angeles Lakers in last month's NBA Finals, were picked as the best team over the Super Bowl champion New England Patriots, World Series-winning Florida Marlins, Stanley

Cup champion Tampa Bay Lightning and the UConn men's and women's basketball teams.

Detroit's Larry Brown won the best coach/manager award, and the Pistons were the winners in the new best upset category.

Among other winners were Cleveland Cavaliers star LeBron James, best breakthrough athlete; Masters champion Phil Mickelson, best male golfer and top championship performance; Manning, best NFL player; Garnett, best NBA player; Lauren Jackson, best WNBA player; Antonio Tarver, best boxer; Stewart Elliott, best jockey; Andy Roddick, best male tennis player, Gail Devers, female track and field, and Serena Williams, best female tennis player.

Golfer Tiger Woods, a winner of a record 15 ESPY awards, didn't win one for the first time since 1999. Bonds and Sorenstam rank second all-time with six such awards. Bonds won as best baseball player and Sorenstam as best female golfer.

George Weah, best known for his achievements on the soccer field, received the Arthur Ashe Courage Award for his humanitarian efforts in his war ravaged homeland of Liberia and other African countries.

The Ashe award is traditionally given to an athlete whose contributions transcend sports.

The ceremony was held at the Kodak Theater and will be televised Sunday by ESPN at 9 p.m. (EDT).

Prosecutor asks to retry Jayson Williams

FLEMINGTON, N.J. (AP)—The prosecutor in the Jayson Williams manslaughter case wants to retry the former NBA star in Hunterdon County.

In papers filed with the trial judge on Wednesday, First Assistant Hunterdon County Prosecutor Steven Lember argued that the retrial should be moved to Hunterdon County, where limousine driver Costas Christofi was killed by a blast from a shotgun handled by Williams.

"Just as the perceived existence of pretrial publicity led the court to change venue to Somerset County, the even-more extensive trial publicity in Somerset County necessitates a return to Hunterdon County," Lember wrote.

Superior Court Judge Edward Coleman moved the first trial to Somerset County because of extensive pretrial publicity.

The 36-year-old Williams was acquitted in April of ag-

gravated manslaughter, aggravated assault and possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, but was convicted on four counts related to his efforts to cover up the shooting.

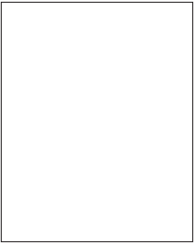
The jury deadlocked on the remaining reckless manslaughter count and a mistrial was declared. Lember decided to retry the case on that one charge.

The retrial is scheduled to start Jan. 10 in Somerville.

Christofi died in 2002 in Williams' Alexandria Township mansion.

If the judge denies Lember's request for a change of venue, the prosecutor has asked that a jury be brought in from a neighboring county with demographics similar to Hunterdon.

Lember will ask Coleman to reconsider his decision not to allow testimony about Williams' prior gun use, including the alleged shooting of his dog.



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Saipan Tribune

Sports

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